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EXPLANATION
OF DEHARBE'S
SMALL CATECHISM.

REVISED

1875

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

NOTATION

OF THE

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

EXPLANATION
OF DEHARBE'S
SMALL CATECHISM

BY

Jacob
(JAMES) CANON SCHMITT, D. D.

TRANSLATED FROM THE 7TH GERMAN EDITION.

WITH THE APPROBATION OF THE RIGHT REV. BISHOP OF SALFORD,
NOW CARDINAL-ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER.



FREIBURG IM BREISGAU (GERMANY). 1894.
B. HERDER, PUBLISHER TO THE HOLY APOSTOLIC SEE.
ST. LOUIS, Mo., VIENNA (AUSTRIA), MUNICH (BAVARIA),
STRASSBURG (ALSACE-LORRAIN).

8 159/2852

SALFORD, May 5th 1891.

Dear Sir!

I am glad to learn that you are publishing an English translation of the "Explanation of Deharbe's admirable Little Catechism". This a work, which ought to become popular in all our Catholic Public Elementary Schools and in our Confraternities of Christian Doctrine.

I trust that your English Edition, which I hear has passed under the hand of competent teachers at Stonyhurst, will receive a hearty welcome in this country. I am, dear Mr Herder, your faithful and devoted servant

† *Herbert, Bishop of Salford.*



TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THIS translation has been undertaken in the hope of bringing under the notice, and within the reach, of English-speaking people the Rev. Dr. James Schmitt's admirable "Explanation of Deharbe's Small Catechism".

In these days, when secular and Godless education is being pushed forward with such vigour—to the manifest ruin of souls—it is all the more necessary to impart to the young the sublime teachings of the Church, in an easy and attractive manner.

No more useful manual of religious instruction has ever, perhaps, left the press, than the work of Dr. J. Schmitt, an English rendering of which is now offered to the public.

The high encomiums, which have been passed upon the original by the Archbishop of Freiburg and the Bishop of Mayence, are a sufficient guarantee of its sterling value as an aid to the clergy, as well as to others, who are engaged in religious teaching.

It has been the conscientious endeavour of the translator to adhere faithfully to the thoughts and ideas of

the original, and to reproduce them in simple language, adapted to the intelligence of children. It will be observed that no explanation of Confession and Holy Communion is given in the translation—Dr. Schmitt having treated of those important matters in another work.—The original text has been faithfully followed throughout. Although the “Explanation” is based upon “Deharbe’s Small Catechism”, it will be found equally suited for use *with any other* Catechism.

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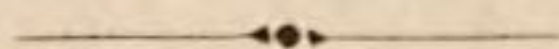
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CATHOLIC DOCTRINE.

INTRODUCTION.

1. For what end are we in this world?

We are in this world to know God, to love Him, and to serve Him, and by so doing to gain Heaven.

WHY are these various things in the school room—the table—the desk—the stove and other things round about? All things are here for some purpose; we can ask the same question about everything, why is it here? And the Catechism asks, why are *we* here? Now, let us look at some living thing, for example, the horse. What is the horse here for? We see him work, and eat, and sleep, and when he gets old, he will die, and then there is no more about him. Now you are living, and like the horse, you have to work, to eat, and to sleep, and some day you will die; but, unlike the horse, there *will* be something more about you. You have something, which the horse has not, viz an immortal soul; that is, a soul, which *cannot* die. And when the life goes out of your body, your soul goes on living. But where does it live? If you have been good, it will live in Heaven; but all men are not good. And what men are not good? Those who do not serve God. Then if I wish to go to Heaven, I must serve God. Now, who

have to serve or obey others in this world? Servants and workpeople must obey their masters. Children must obey their parents. Masters have servants, in order that they may do the work of the masters. They go into service with the master for this purpose; and we are in this world to serve our Master, who is God. But when do we serve and obey God properly?

Suppose a gardener has two servants, Joseph and Peter.—Joseph loves the gardener as if he were his father, but Peter does *not* love his master. Now, which of the two will serve his master well? So then, to serve God well, what must we do? We must *love* Him. God has therefore commanded us to love Him. So, those who do not love God, do not obey God, and so do not serve Him properly.

But, in order that we may love God, there is something, which is necessary; we shall see, what it is. If I say to you: Do you love the Emperor of China? You will say, I do not know him at all. So you see that, in order to love anybody, we must first know him.

In the same way, if you wish to love God, you must first *know* Him. Hence the Catechism says: You are in this world to know God, that is to say, to *learn* to know Him.

Now, when do you know anybody? You know a person, when you know who, and what that person is; where he is; and so on. In the same way, you know God, when you know *who* God is; *where* He is; *what* He gives us; and so on.

Now, when I say to you, you are in this world to know God; that means, you are in this world to learn something, and if possible a great deal, about God.

Now, the first part of the answer to the question, 'Why are we in this world', is, that we are in this world to learn something, and if possible a great deal, about God, and so to *know* a great deal, about Him.

Now, is it enough, that you should know God? No, when you see, how good He is, you will love Him; and when you love Him, what will you do? When children love their mother, and she tells them to do something, they do it at once. So then, if you love God, what will you do? Obey Him. And when, in this way, you have learnt a great deal, about God, and loved Him very much, and obeyed Him willingly, then when one day you come to die, where will you go? To Heaven.

2. What is Heaven?

Heaven is a place of everlasting and perfect happiness.

If we go to Heaven, how shall we be? We shall be perfectly happy. Who are the people, that are happy in this world? Are the beggars happy, who have to suffer from hunger and cold? Are sick people happy, who have to lie in bed and suffer great pain? No, because they have pain or suffering to bear. Whoever has pain or suffering to bear, is not happy. Those who are perfectly happy, have no pain or suffering, but much joy and pleasure. Now, those who are in Heaven, are happy. Therefore what is it they have not? They have not any pain or suffering, no head-ache, no tooth-ache, no hunger, no thirst, they do not suffer from cold or heat, and no one ever dies there. And they have many, indeed all joys and pleasures. Think of some pleasures you have had, when for instance you have been allowed to go with some one into a beautiful garden: or when you have had pretty things given to you; or when your father and mother have been away for a long time and have come home again; when they have praised you and loved you very much. Now, in Heaven it is much more beautiful than in the most beautiful garden; *there* you will have much

prettier things; *there* you will be with your Heavenly Father, who is many thousands of times kinder than your father at home, and loves you very, very much more; and you will be with the Blessed Virgin and all the shining angels, and they will all love you.

So then, those who are in Heaven, are happy. But there is still a little word to be explained. Their happiness is *perfect*. What is that? If a man had only four fingers on his hand, would that hand be perfect? No, because there is a finger wanting. So you see a hand is perfect, to which there is nothing wanting; and that happiness is perfect, to which there is nothing wanting.

People often say, such a one is happy, because he is in good health and he enjoys many pleasures. But nobody is *perfectly* happy; there is always something wanting to his happiness.

We will suppose, for example, a child is healthy and strong, but he has poor parents, and he often has to suffer hunger and cold. Another has plenty of food and clothes, but he is sick, has bad health; a third is healthy and rich, but he has a sick mother, and so on. So you see there is always something wanting. No one is quite happy, *perfectly* happy. Even if any one had every (earthly) happiness, one thing would always be wanting; we shall see, what that is.—No doubt you have been very happy sometimes, when your father has taken you a little journey with him; or when you have had a pretty book given you, or some new clothes. But how long has your joy lasted? Is it not true, that it was not more than a couple of days at most? then you thought no more about it. So you see your happiness was not perfect, because it did not last. So it is with all happiness in this world; it does not last long. And even if any one could be happy for ten or twenty years, at

last he must die, and then there is an end of his happiness. Now, is it thus with the happiness and the joys of Heaven? No, they last for *ever*; that means, they have *no* end—they never cease. Only think, if you had for a whole week everything you liked: nice food, new clothes, pretty playthings, and so on; in short every pleasure and no pain; how nice that would be, would it not?

But a week is soon gone; but if I could promise you, you should have for a whole year, for 365 days, every pleasure, if you only kept good for one single day, how gladly you would obey, would you not?

Now see, the good God has promised you, you shall go to Heaven; and shall have every happiness there, without any end, eternal. Would you not like to obtain that? Certainly you would all like that. But what must you do then? You must *know* God, love Him, serve Him, and so on. So first of all you must *know* God; but,

3. How do you learn to know God?

By means of the Christian Faith.

How do you learn to know another child? By often seeing him. In the same way, you know a town, when you often go and see it. But can you learn to know God in that way? No, because you cannot see God. How then *do* you learn to know Him? Can you not know a great many things about a town without ever having seen it?

Of course you can, when (for example) your father has been there and has told you about it. Well, some one has been with God, and has seen Him, and knows, how good God is; and the same person has come to us and told us many things about the good God; He is Jesus Christ. And that which He has told us about

God, is called (in short) the *Christian faith* or belief;—*Christian*, because Christ said it; and *belief*, because we must believe it.

4. What do you mean by Faith?

By Faith I mean believing in something as truth, because God has said it.

What Jesus Christ has said, *that* we must believe. What is that then? If a bad boy, who had often told you stories before, were to say to you: the school-house is burnt down; what would you think? You would think, "That is not true";—you would not believe it. But if your father or your teacher told you something, what would you think then? You would think, "That is true". Now see, when you think, "that is true"; then you believe your father, and why do you think so? Why do you believe him? Because your father certainly does not deceive you (speaks the truth). Now, just listen: Jesus Christ has told us a great deal, about God; what must we think then? We must think, "That is most certainly true", because Jesus Christ cannot lie; He is God, and God speaks only the pure truth. Now, if I tell you, what Jesus has told us, and you think: God has said that, that is certainly true; what do you do? You believe.

I will now relate to you a great deal, of what Jesus has told us about God; you must pay great attention, because that is how you will best learn to know God.

The first thing a good child must do, is: he must take a great deal of trouble to learn to know God well, for if he knows nothing about God, he cannot love Him (see Quest. 1).

5. What truths must a Christian believe above all things?

He must believe above all things five truths or mysteries of Faith.

If I say: a good child must *above all things* pray well; what do I mean; I mean, that it is necessary for a good child, to be industrious, kind, amiable, and obedient; but that it is still more necessary, that he should pray well. So it means then, that there are five truths, which a Christian must believe before all things. A Christian must believe many more things besides; namely, *all* which God has revealed; but the most necessary are these five truths, which a Christian must believe first of all. And what are these five truths?

6. What is the first truth?

That there is only one God.

7. What is the second truth?

That there are three Persons in God.

8. What is the third truth?

That God created all things, and rules and governs all things.

9. What is the fourth truth?

That God the Son became man and redeemed us by His death upon the Cross.

10. What is the fifth truth?

That God rewards the good, and punishes the wicked for all eternity.

I. PART.

T R U T H S,

WHICH ALL MUST KNOW AND BELIEVE.

FIRST TRUTH.

OF GOD.

So then, the first thing, which a Christian must believe, is, *that there is only one God.*

11. Who is God?

God is the Lord and Master of Heaven and Earth, from Whom all good things come.

WHO is the master in your house? Father. Why? Because the house belongs to him; and secondly because in his house all must obey him. So also is God *the Master of Heaven and Earth.* Why? Because Heaven and Earth and all things in Heaven and Earth belong to Him. He can do with them, what He wills (as you can with your pencils etc.). Now, what is there in Heaven? (Angels, saints)—What is in the sky? (Sun, moon, stars, clouds)—What is on the Earth? (Stones, plants, animals); all these belong to God. When any one has a large farm-house and a great many fields, then people say, he is rich. Now, God does not merely possess a farm, but the whole Earth;—all the meadows, the mountains, all belong to Him. Yes, even Heaven; in short, every thing is His. Then how rich God must be!

And secondly God is Master of Heaven and Earth, because all things in Heaven and on Earth must obey Him. He makes the Sun to rise, when He wills.

Animals do only, what God has commanded them. When God wills, the wind blows, the rain falls—everything obeys God. So, dear children, you also must always carefully and diligently obey the good God.

God is the Master of Heaven and Earth, *from Whom all good things come*. Now just tell me, what good things you have (parents, brothers and sisters, food, clothing, eyesight, good health, understanding—)? All these come from God. God gives them to you. I will explain that to you later on.

12. Are there more gods than one?

No, there is only one God.

There have been many people and there are still many, dear children, who have thought and who still think, that there are many Gods. These people are called heathens. Some of them believe, that the sun, the moon and the stars are gods; others make idols for themselves out of wood or stone, which look like men, and they suppose these idols are gods. Again, others think, that in Heaven above there are several gods, whom we do not see, not one God only, but several gods. Are these heathens right? No, because there is only one God. By-and-by I will tell you more about these poor heathens, who know nothing about God; then you will see better, how happy you are, and how much you ought to thank God, that you are not heathens, and that you know God and love Him, and may go to Him in Heaven. But, for this reason, you must pay attention and learn well, otherwise you would be ungrateful and would not deserve the great happiness, which God is ready to give you.

How long then has God already existed? or, as the Catechism asks:

13. Had God any beginning?

No, God had no beginning and will have no end; He is Eternal.

Twelve years ago were you already alive? When did you come into the world? . . . Then, *that* was when you had your beginning, when you began to live. But before you came into the world, who was there in it? . . . And before your parents came into the world, who was in it? . . . Your house has perhaps stood many years longer than your grand-parents have lived; but there was a time, when it was not there, when it was not yet built; so, *it had a beginning*. And before the first house in our town was built, there were then the mountains, the hills, the woods, the forests etc. But these also had a beginning. Before them there was the sun, the stars, the holy angels etc. But all these had a beginning too, since God made them, and before He made them, they did not exist. But God *never* had a beginning: He has *always* been. It is now nearly 6000 years, since God created the world; only think, how many days that makes . . . But God existed before that. And if you think of 6000 years before that, and again 6000 years before that, and so on; ever and ever God has been; He never had a beginning; He is *without any beginning at all*.

All things in the world had a beginning and all will have *an end*. The grass and the pretty flowers in the meadows are mowed down and given to the cattle for food; that is their end, the end for which they were created. Animals are killed, and sometimes they die; that is the end of them. In one or two, or ten or more years, you also will die. In a hundred years it is probable, that not one person will be left in the whole of our parish, out of all the people, who come every

Sunday to church here. The houses, in which we live, will fall down or will be pulled down. The mountains, the woods, the rivers, sun, moon and stars, all will have an end. When? . . . But when the end of the world has come, who will there be then? God; Yes, God *will have no end*. What do we call God then, since He had no beginning and will have no end? . . .

You have already heard, that all things in the world will have an end. But there is something, besides God, which will have no end, what is that? When you die, is all at an end with you? What has no end? . . . Is your soul *eternal* too, then? . . . Why not? It will certainly have no end, but it had a beginning, so it is not eternal.

You know now, how long God has existed, and how long He will exist. Now we must also see:

14. Where is God?

God is everywhere, in Heaven, on Earth, and in all places.

God is in Heaven; He is there, where the angels and the Blessed Virgin and all the saints are. He is where the sun is, and where the moon is, and where the stars are. He is in *all places on Earth*. Mention to me some such places (room, cellar, school, church, field, wood). God is *in all these places*. You are now in school; can you be at home also at the same time? No; but God is, at the same time, in your house, and in this school. And is God merely here, in this town? Is He not also in other towns? It takes an hour to get from here to the next town. But Africa is several hundreds of miles farther off: is God there also? . . . And the stars are thousands of miles farther off.—A man would not reach them (supposing there were any road, by which he could go) even, if he travelled as fast as possible without

stopping for a hundred years: is God there also? Yes, God is in all places; everywhere.

Only think, dear children, how great God is then, since He is everywhere, in all places! Now, if you were alone in a wood, or in a dark room, my child, would you be afraid? . . . But would you be afraid, if your father were there with you? . . . Why not? Who is with you always? The good God, and He loves you much more, and can protect you much better than your father can. So only be a good child, that God may love you; then you need not be afraid, wherever you may be.

St. Martin was once travelling a long way away from his home, and on his journey he came to a large wood; there, some robbers attacked him, and behaved so cruelly to him, that it seemed, as though they intended to kill him. But St. Martin did not show any signs of fear, so the robbers said to him: are you not afraid? No, answered St. Martin, God, my father, is with me, who is sure to help me; and unless He wills it, you can do me no harm. (The narrative may be repeated by one of the children, questions asked about it, and the point applied).

15. Does God know and see all things?

Yes, God knows and sees all things, even our most secret thoughts.

Since God is everywhere, He knows and sees all things. Do you know, what is going on now at your home? . . . Why not? Because you are not at home. But does God know? . . . Why? Because He is there. But listen to me now. Do you know, what is going on now in this school? What your companion is doing? Yes. Why? Because you can see him. But would you know, if it were quite dark? Well, you see what that child *does*:

do you also see, what he *thinks*? . . . Why not? He thinks by means of his soul, and we cannot see, what the soul does: because we cannot see the soul. But *God* knows, what you think, even your *most secret thoughts*, of which you show no signs. Very often one *can* see, what you are thinking; for example, when you get a new shilling and you look very joyful. But very often you think of something, and *nothing* can be seen of it, and you do not tell any body. Now these are *secret thoughts*, which no man can see, but God sees them. You have heard, that Judas betrayed Our Blessed Saviour. When he first thought about it, he kept his thoughts quite secret: the apostles, who were with him, did not notice anything. But Jesus saw it and knew it perfectly well, because Jesus is God, and God sees even the most secret thoughts.

So mark this well: When you think within yourself: I should like to take this apple etc. Who knows of it? . . . Why? . . .

Again, do you know now, all you thought, said and did a week ago? A month ago? You have forgotten. But God knows all, that all men have thought, said and done; all that has happened from the beginning of the world up to this present time. God knows the *Past*: if you were to live to be a hundred years old and then die, He would know whether you, when you were a child at school, had prayed devoutly, or how often you had dishonoured His Holy Name etc.

Of what you have thought and done, you yourself know something; but do you also know, what you *will* do to-morrow or in a month's or a year's time? No, you know nothing of what will happen. But God knows all things, what will be done even to the end of the world, to all eternity. He knows, how many people will come into the world, and what they will all think and do. He knows, whether you will be still alive in ten

years time, whether you will be good, whether you will go to Heaven etc. God knows *the Future*.

So God knows *the Past; the Present and the Future*. He knows *all* things. What do we call God therefore, since He knows all things? Omniscient. Why is God called Omniscient? . . .

One day two children, a brother and sister, named James and Anna, were left at home by themselves, their father and mother having gone out; and James said to his sister: "Now we can take something nice to eat, nobody will see us". Was that right? . . . Why not? . . . Well, Anna answered: "Where can we take anything then, without anybody seeing us?" "We can go into the kitchen, said James, and take something out of the cup-board." "One of the neighbours might see us there through the kitchen-window," said Anna. "Well," said James, "then we will go into the cellar; there it is quite dark; there I am sure nobody will see us". "Do you really think that?" said Anna, don't you know: "God is everywhere, and sees and knows all things?"

What should you think then, when you are about to do anything wrong, for instance, when you would like to steal something nice, or do something, of which you ought to be ashamed, and the thought comes to you, nobody can see? You should say to yourself: "God sees me."

But God not only sees, when you are wicked, no, He sees also, when you are a good child, when you say your prayers well, and when you are obedient, and then God is pleased with you, and loves you and does not forget it, and will one day reward you for it in Heaven. So then, when you are going to say your prayers, or when your parents ask something of you, then think to yourself 'The good God in Heaven sees me; so I will do it willingly, that He may be pleased with me.'

16. Can we also see God?

No, we cannot see God, because He is a spirit and has no body.

You have heard, dear children, that God is everywhere; He is therefore in this room.—Then why do we not see Him? Can you see your companion, who is near you? . . . What can you see of him? Head, hands etc. What do we call that altogether? His body. Has your companion nothing else besides a body? What is contained in the body? The soul, but that we cannot see. Now, if this child had only a soul and no body; could you see it? . . . You could not, because a soul is a spirit, which cannot be seen. Now, God is a spirit and has no body, and none of those things, which make up a body.

You have already heard, that God sees all things. Has God eyes then? . . . No, for then He would have a body, because eyes belong to a body, that can be seen. So when we say God sees, we mean something different. If I say a man has good eyes, I mean he can see well. And if I say, some one has no eyes, I mean he cannot see at all. But when we say God sees, we mean that, though God has not got eyes as you have, yet He sees everything much better, than if He had the eyes of all the men in the world put together.

God knows all things, but can He *do* all things?

17. Can God do all things?

Yes, God can do all things that He wills, without need of anything.

Can men also do everything they wish? There are some men, who can do a great many things; who have a great deal of money; and a great many soldiers, whom they can command. These men are called kings, or princes, and it is said they are mighty or powerful, because they can do a great deal.—A certain king

Philip went one day with his son into a wood, and there it began to rain hard. Now the king's son had often heard people say, how mighty and powerful his father was, and how much he could do; so he said to him, 'Father, command the rain to cease'; but his father answered: 'Dear child, I cannot; only the great king of Heaven, who can do all things, whatever He wills, can do that'. Now, tell me, what this mighty king could not do . . . Mention some things, which men cannot do . . . They cannot alter the weather; they cannot make the sun shine; they can never make one single blade of grass, or one little flower (they can make them of paper, but they are not real flowers, are not so beautiful, and have no sweet smell). They cannot prevent any one from dying; they cannot bring the dead to life. All these and many other things they cannot do. And even for what they *can* do, they require God's help, and they need many things to do it with (see Quest. 28). *But God can do all things by His will alone, and without need of anything.* He can do, what all men cannot do. He can make the sun shine, He can send storms and rain. He can make the seeds in the fields either grow or die.—He can prevent a person from dying, or make a dead person live again; in short, He can do *all* things, and He requires *nothing* to do it with, and no *time* to do it in; He only needs to will or wish it. There is really nothing, which God cannot do, nothing, which is impossible to Him, even the greatest and the most difficult things.

The doctor, for instance, as you know, can make sick people well; but can he make *all* sick people well? No, there are many, whom he cannot cure, he can only cure people, when God helps him. And again; does he merely say to the sick person; „I will; be cured?" No, he must give the sick person medicine, and the sick person must

lie in bed a long time, and so on. But God can cure all sick people, and without any medicine: He only needs to will it, and the sick person is healed. Thus Jesus (who is really God) once cured a sick person, who had been ill 38 years, and whom no doctor could cure. He only said: "Arise", and the sick man stood up and was quite cured.

18. What do we call God, since He can do all things?

We call Him Almighty.

You have already heard, that people are called powerful or *mighty*, who can do many things; but we call God *Almighty*, because He can do *all* things.

Yes, dear children, mark this well; God can do all things; He can help, where no *man* can help. When the Jews went out of the land of Egypt by God's command, the wicked king Pharaoh, with a great number of his soldiers, followed after them, and wanted to make them prisoners, or to kill them. Only think; the Jews were close to the sea (which is, as you know, a very large piece of water), when the king came up behind them, and they could not go on any further, or they would have been drowned in the deep sea. On both sides of them there were steep rocks, and behind them was the king with his soldiers. In such a position no human being could help them. But the Jews trusted in God, and He helped them.

He caused the waters to divide and made a way through the sea, and right and left the water rose up like a wall. Then the Jews passed through; and when they were on the other side, Pharaoh and his soldiers followed this same way after them; then the water, which till then had remained still and stationary, rolled together again, and the king and his soldiers were all drowned. (Here the tale of the three children in the fiery furnace, and of Daniel in the lions' den might be told.)

In whom then should we trust, dear children, when we are in any necessity, poor or sick, or otherwise afflicted or distressed? And when no human being can help us any more, who is there who can help us then? . . . So then, if your father or mother, or brother or sister, should be sick, and the doctor should say, there is danger, and that he can help only very little, what should you do? You should pray to God, who can always help us.

I read, a short time ago, of a girl, who was very dangerously ill, and the doctor said she would die. Then the young companions of the girl made a pilgrimage together, and asked God very fervently to make her well; and from that same hour the girl got better and soon became quite well again. So should you also pray very fervently to God in the church, or at home, and kneel down and make the sign of the cross and lift up your little hands and say: "Blessed Lord! dear Father in Heaven, Thou art Almighty. Thou can'st make my father well. I pray Thee then most earnestly to make him well again: I will be a good child, and obey Thee in all things;" and then say an Our Father, and a Hail Mary.

SECOND TRUTH.

OF GOD IN THREE PERSONS.

We have gone through the first truth, which a Christian must believe; we now come to the second truth, namely that there are three persons in one God.

19. How many Divine Persons are there?

There are three Divine Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

You heard, a little while ago, that there is only one God; but is there also only one Divine Person?

No, there are three Divine Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.—Now see, you are a person, your neighbour is also a person, your father is a person, and every body on Earth is a person—a *human* person. Now, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are also three Persons (each one is a Person), but three *Divine* Persons because each one, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, is God.

20. Is the Father God?

Yes, the Father is truly God.

The Father is truly God, that means, He is really God,—not merely, that He is called God. The heathens also called their stone images or idols gods—they said they were gods—,but it was not true. But the Father is truly God. What have you now learnt about God? That He is the Lord of Heaven and Earth, everywhere present (Omnipresent), that He knows all things (Omniscient), that He is Eternal. Then if the Father is truly God, what must He be? He must be Lord of Heaven and Earth, Omnipresent, Omniscient and Eternal. You know that from the history of the Creation, and of our first parents. You heard then, that God the Father made Heaven and Earth—they therefore belong to Him. He is their Lord, and from Him come all good things in Heaven and on Earth, because He made all things; He gave Adam and Eve the beautiful garden etc. Does anything in the history of Adam and Eve also show, that God the Father is Omniscient? . . .—He knew everything, that Adam and Eve had done.

21. Is the Son God?

Yes, the Son is truly God.

(See Quest. 20.) What must the Son be then, since He is God?

22. Is the Holy Ghost also God?

Yes, the Holy Ghost is also truly God.

(Explanation the same as at Quest. 20.)

23. Is there only one God?

Yes, these three Persons are only one God.

As I said before, you are one person—and you—and you. You are three human persons. Now how many human persons are you? Three human persons. Well, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are also three Persons—three Divine Persons; now are there also three gods? No, they are only one God; the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. But still there is only one God. How it is, that there are three Divine Persons and yet only one God; no man can understand, and yet it is most certainly true, and we must believe it most firmly, because God Himself has told us, that it is so.

You—and you—and you—You are three human persons, but you are not alike, not equal. This one is taller than that one; that one is older; he came into the world sooner etc. Now is it also the same with the three Divine Persons?

24. Is the Father older or mightier than the Son?

No, all three Persons have existed from all eternity and are equally Mighty, equally Good, and equally Perfect.

You are older than this child, because you came into the world, before he did. Your father is older than you, because he was in the world, before you were. How would God the Father be older than God the Son? He would be older, if He had existed before the Son.

But is that so? . . . Why not? Because all three Divine Persons have existed *from all eternity*, are eternal

(Quest. 13). Therefore God the Father and God the Son have *always* been, they never had any beginning, therefore neither existed before the other; so then, God the Father did not exist before God the Son, and is not older than the Son. And it is the same with the Holy Ghost.

All three Persons are equally powerful or mighty. When should I say these boys are *equally strong*? When one is as strong as the other. All three Persons (Father, Son and Holy Ghost) are *equally mighty*, that means therefore: one Person is as mighty as the other, the Father is as mighty as the Son, and so on. How mighty is the Father then? What do you say in the creed? (I believe in God the Father Almighty) He is Almighty; He can do all things, whatever He wills. Well, God the Son is equally mighty. He also can do all things, for instance, He can make the sun to shine, send storms and thunder, heal the sick, raise the dead to life (Quest. 56). If He could not do all things, He would not be God; and the Holy Ghost is also Almighty etc.

All three Persons are *equally good*; you say "father and mother are equally good to me", that is, one is as good as the other, my father loves me as well as my mother, my mother gives me as many good things as my father. Well, it means here, that all three Divine Persons are equally good,—the Father loves me as much as the Son, the Holy Ghost gives me as many good gifts as the Father etc. All good gifts come from God (name such good gifts); the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost give them to us.

And all three Persons are *equally perfect*. (See the explanation of perfect at Quest. 2.) The Father has all good things; He has everything, which is good and beautiful etc. The Son has everything, that the Father has, and the Holy Ghost has everything, that the Father and the Son have.

Therefore, you see, that there are three Divine Persons, and that these three are all equally mighty; because these three Persons are only one God.

25. By what name do we call the one Godhead in three Persons?

We call it the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity.

Since the one God is threefold in Persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, we therefore call the one Godhead (= the one God) in three Persons *the Holy Trinity*. Why? . . . People also call the one God in three Persons the Holy Triune God. This word means three and one; three Persons and one God.

We Christians, therefore, believe in one God in three Persons, in the Holy Trinity. How do we show, that we believe this?

26. By what sign do we show, that we believe in the Holy Trinity?

By the sign of the Cross, when we say: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

So we show by the sign of the cross, that we believe in the Holy Trinity. What does that mean? I will try to explain. Suppose, one day when you went home from school, you were to see in the room a man, who was quite a stranger to you, and who was dressed quite differently from the people about here. You would not know, whether he was a Jew, or a heathen, who believes there are many gods, or one who believes in the most Holy Trinity. But now the dinner is put on the table, and you begin to say grace. The stranger also makes the sign of the cross and says: In the name

of the Father etc. What can you tell by that? In whom does the man believe? . . . How do you know that? . . . So you see, by the sign of the cross, which he made, he has shown you, that he believes in the Holy Trinity. And when you make the sign of the cross yourself, it is the same as if you said: I believe in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost; people, who see you do so, know by it, that you believe in the Holy Trinity.

Who knows another little prayer to repeat to me, by which we show, that we believe in the Holy Trinity? People sometimes make the sign of the cross, when they repeat it, they say that prayer, each time they finish one decade of the Rosary and before they begin another. . . . Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

And why do we make the sign of the cross, just when we say: In the name of the etc. Who died on the cross? See, dear children, God the Son became man and then, in the midst of the most frightful torments, died on the cross for us; because He loved us so much. If He had not died on the cross, we should have known nothing about the Holy Trinity, nor of God's love, nor of His grace, and we could not have gone to Heaven, but must all have been lost. If any one were to pull you out of the water, in which you were in great danger of being drowned, would you not thank him and think very often of him? Now see; Jesus Christ has, by His holy cross, saved us from something far worse, from sin and hell. We should therefore take pleasure in thinking of Him very often, and thank Him very heartily, and as often as we make the sign of the cross, we should think, that Our Blessed Saviour redeemed us by the cross. And again something more, dear children, through Our

dear Saviour's death on the cross, God loves us again and restores to us again all good gifts.

Therefore we make the sign of the cross, when we pray to God, when we ask anything of Him, because by that God loves us the more and gives us all the sooner, what we pray for. St. Anthony and many other saints often merely made the sign of the cross over the sick, and God through the sign of the cross restored their health.

So Almighty God will protect us more readily in danger, and help us sooner in our necessities, if, in danger or necessity, we make the sign of the cross. You should make this sign more especially in the morning, when you rise, that our Saviour may guard and bless you through the whole day, and shield you from every evil; that you may begin the day, and do everything during the day, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and thereby please the most Holy Trinity. You should make the sign of the cross before going to sleep, that our Blessed Lord may protect and guard you the whole night through; that you may not die, and that no danger may befall you.

And as you sign yourself with the sign of the holy cross, when you pray, you should think:

1. That Jesus will help you, through His holy cross, to pray well, so that God may grant your prayer.

2. You should recollect, that in prayer you speak to the Blessed Trinity; therefore you must pray piously and devoutly.

You make the sign of the cross on your forehead, because, as we commonly say, we think by means of our head, we speak with our mouth, and with our heart we are said to love. Therefore, when you sign yourself with the cross on your forehead, your mouth and your heart, you should try to think of our Blessed Lord, to speak to Him, and to love Him.

Be very diligent, therefore, in making the holy sign of the cross both morning and evening, and when you begin your prayers; at the same time think of the Blessed Trinity, and of our dear Lord, Who died for you. Then you will the more easily become good and happy children, and you will go the sooner to God in Heaven.

THIRD TRUTH.

OF GOD THE CREATOR AND PRESERVER OF THE WORLD.

§ 1. Of the world in general.

We are now going to speak, first about God creating the whole world in general, or as a whole, and then, in particular, of the principal creatures, which He created in the world.

27. Why do we call God the Creator of the world?

Because God created the whole world, namely, Heaven and Earth, and all that they contain.

We say in the creed: "I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth". Why do we call God Creator? Creator comes from "to create". Heaven and Earth and all that is therein, we call in one word, the world; therefore we call God the Creator of the world. What then is the world made up of? First, there is the beautiful blue sky above us, which we see, and which we sometimes call Heaven. Now, what is there in this Heaven? Sun, moon, stars, clouds. But there is another Heaven, which as yet we cannot see; but into which we shall one day enter, if we have been good here. Now, who is there in this Heaven? There are the angels, whom God created bright and beautiful spirits; and besides these there are the good people, who have died, and whom God has taken up into Heaven.

God has made all this, or, as the Catechism says, has *created* it all. He has also created *the Earth*, on which we dwell, and everything that is in it. What do you mean by all that is in the world? Rocks, mountains, rivers, etc.; plants and animals. God has therefore created all these. But,

28. What do we mean by the word “create”?

By the word “create” we mean to produce something out of nothing.

Do people say, the shoemaker *creates* a shoe? . . . Why not? Because to create means to make something *out of nothing*. Does the shoemaker make the shoe out of nothing? No, first of all he wants leather to make the shoe with.—Does he want anything else to make the shoe? Yes, he wants *tools*. But suppose he has the leather and the tools, does he put the tools by the side of the leather and say: Let a shoe be made? No; he must *work*. And is it done in a moment? No; he must work at it many hours; he needs *time*. So then men want *materials: tools, work, and time*, when they make anything. Now, did Almighty God also require all these things, when He made the world? No; what materials would He have had to make the world out of? There was nothing whatever in existence then; and He required neither tools, nor work, nor time. He needed nothing whatever. He made the world *out of nothing*.

29. How did God create Heaven and Earth?

By His Almighty Will.

What did Almighty God do, then, when He made Heaven and Earth? How, for instance, did He make the light? He only said: “Let there be light”, and the light was there instantly.—He made use of nothing for that: he only spoke.

How do you speak? With your tongue. Has God a tongue? . . . Why not? He has no body. But if God has no tongue, why do we say God spoke? When you are hungry and want a piece of bread, what do you do? You say to your mother, "Mother, please give me a piece of bread". The words, which you speak, show your mother, what is your will. Now, when we say God has spoken, we mean God has so willed.

Therefore we say, God made the world by His *Almighty Will*; that means, that He so willed, that the world *should exist*.

And because His Will is almighty—that is, because He can do all things, which He wills (Quest. 17 and 18). He only needed to will it, and behold, the world was there!

Now, think again of all the things, that there are on the Earth. For instance, think, how many beautiful flowers there are; how beautiful the violets are in the spring; the primroses and the many flowers in the meadows, and the roses in the gardens, and how sweet they smell. And how pretty the cherry-trees and apple-trees are, when they are in blossom, and how nice the fruit is that grows on them, is it not? Now only think, how many such flowers and trees there are, that we have seen, and how many there are, in the thousands and thousands of other places in the world, that we have not seen. Flowers, which are much more beautiful than ours; trees, which are much larger than the highest about here. And all these beautiful flowers and trees God made with one word.

How great, and how beautiful, and how good must the good God be then, Who has made so many good and beautiful things and given them to us!

Now again, think of the animals, how many there are of them also! There are very little tiny animals, so small, that you cannot see them at all. How many thousands of lively little birds fly and twitter and rejoice

and sing so merrily! And in foreign lands there are magnificent birds, which have such brilliant coloured wings like gold and silver, or like the colours of the rainbow. And there are birds, which are taller than a tall man. And how gay and sprightly the little fishes swim about in the water, and how quickly they come, when anybody throws in some little crumbs to them. But the fishes in our brooks and ponds are only little ones. Have you ever heard of the sea?

It is a piece of water, ever so many thousands and thousands of times larger than the largest pond. And people are, many hours and many days, sailing along on it quite fast, and coming to no end, and seeing nothing but the sky above and the water beneath. And in this sea there are bright and beautiful fishes, and there are some fishes, which can fly also, and again others, which are so large, much larger than this room, and even longer than the whole school-house. And now think, all these beautiful large fishes and birds, and the sea, God made them all with one word.

Every little animal, however small it may be, has its use. The domestic animals are of the most use to us (give examples of such, and of the use they are to us), and who gave us these animals, who created them?

And now I will tell you, something about what God has made in the Heavens. If anyone were to hang up a lamp in a large room, it would require to be very large and to burn very clearly for all the room to be lighted up by it. But God has hung up in the sky, for the use of the whole world, for all people and all animals, the sun, which we see in the sky, and which is not hanging from anything; and how large do you think it is?—as large as a house? Well, it is many thousand times larger than the largest house, than the highest mountain, larger than the whole Earth.

And it not only shines so brightly, but it also gives warmth and makes everything grow and flourish in the fields and in the woods. And the bright moon, which shines so softly, and the little stars, which twinkle so prettily at night, are they not beautiful? How large do you think a star is? Much larger than the greatest mountain, larger even than the whole Earth. And there are thousands and millions of such stars. And now think, all these large and beautiful stars God made with only a word! How great, how beautiful, and how powerful must God be then. Therefore, when you see, dear children, how beautiful the world is, and when you rejoice over the pretty flowers and the nice fruit, and over the birds, which sing so sweetly, never forget, that God made them all.—You should then love Him and thank Him very much indeed.

When the joiner has made a table, he sells it and troubles himself no further about it, and yet the table keeps up all the same. Now is it so with the world? After God had made the world, was it necessary for Him, to trouble Himself any further about it? Can the world go on alone without God? No. So the Catechism asks:

30. What does God do, in order that the world, which He created, should not perish?

He preserves and governs the world.

If you had a plant in a pot or a bird in a cage and you did nothing for it, what would happen? The plant would wither, the bird would die—they would perish. So would the world perish, if God did nothing for it. The sun, the moon, the stars, the plants, the animals, all, the whole world would be sure to perish. But such is not the will of God. Therefore He does two things, that the world may not perish: He preserves the world,

and He governs the world. So first: God *preserves* the world. What does that mean?

31. What do we mean, when we say: God preserves the world?

We mean: God causes the world to last, as long as He pleases.

I have a book in my hand; if I did not hold my hand under it, it would fall to the ground. So would the whole world fall back into nothing, if God did not hold, *preserve* it. How does God do that? I will tell you.

You uphold or preserve the plant, of which I have been speaking, when you give it water, and the little bird, when you feed it. So you make the plant and the bird to continue to exist, you keep them alive. In like manner your father preserves you; he gives you food, clothing etc. If he did not, you would die, you could not continue to exist. Well then, your father keeps you in life, preserves you.

Now, what you do for the little bird, and what your father does for you, that, and a very great deal more, Almighty God does for the whole world. He makes people continue to live, He gives them food and what they require, that they may not die, and gives them, what your father cannot give you,—health and life. God sends every day new people and animals into the world, and makes them continue to live, and makes fresh plants grow. God also preserves the Earth, the stars and the sun from perishing. And how long will God preserve all things like that? *As long as He pleases*, as long as He wills it. When He no longer wills it, then the world will come to an end.

So the first thing, that God does to keep the world from perishing, is: He *preserves* the world. Now, what is the second thing, that God does? He governs the world.

32. What do we mean, when we say: God governs the world?

We mean: God takes care of all, He orders and directs all things, as He wills.

Who rules in your house? Father. He *takes care* of all. He sows in the spring, so that he may reap in the summer and autumn, that you may have food to eat in the winter, and also that he may have something to sell, so as to buy you clothes with the money. So your father *takes care*, that you may have food to eat and clothes to wear; that is to say, he provides for your food and clothing. Again, what does your father send you to school and to Catechism for? To learn something and become good. Therefore he provides for your instruction, so that you may be able to do some good later on, and grow up good and honest. Just as your father provides for you, so does God provide for the whole world. How does He provide for the plants? He makes the rain to fall and the sun to shine. How does He provide for the animals? He makes the grass grow. How for people? He provides for their food and clothing, because He gives them plants and animals, which they can make use of for their food and clothing.

And He takes care, that they may be taught and become good; for He gives the children parents and teachers, and He has provided priests to teach the people at school and in the church, and to help them to live good lives and to get to Heaven.

“Your father rules in your house” means secondly, that he *orders and directs everything*. He tells every one in the house, what he is to do—He *orders* everything in the house. And he *directs* everything. The carter *guides* the horses in the waggon, he makes them go as he wishes, to the right or to the left, quickly or slowly,

just as he pleases. In the same way the father *guides* or conducts everything in the house, he arranges, so that all shall do as he wishes.

So, dear children, God *orders* and *guides* all things in the whole world. God says to the sun: you must now rise, and in summer shine very hot, in winter not so hot, and so on. God says to the clouds: you must now come and bring rain; God says to the horses, oxen etc.: you must live with man, and obey him, and help him in his work. If God did not do that, if, for instance, the sun went down one day early, and the next day late, and sometimes not at all, what would happen? Great disorder. Therefore God *orders* all things. God makes the day, in which man can work, and night, that man may sleep. God makes the winter, when the Earth can rest; then spring, when it is warmer again, and the grass and the blossoms come; then summer, when it is quite hot, and the fruit ripens; and autumn, when the harvest is gathered in, etc.

And God *orders* all things with men also, as He wills. He makes them live a long or a short time, and He makes them poor or rich. God certainly does not make people wicked; but He so orders all things, that they are punished for their sins. In short, everything must go on, as God wills. So whatever happens to us, dear children, if we are ill, or people behave badly to us, all that happens only, because God permits it; *nothing happens by chance*, that is, nothing happens without the knowledge and permission of God.—God permits everything, that happens to us, even that which is painful or hard to us, such as sickness, poverty etc. And what He wills and does, is for our salvation and eternal good; that is, what God sends us, helps us, that we may gain Heaven, if only we obey Him.

Yes, dear children, God rules all things, as He wills; but He wills, that the good should be rewarded and

gain Heaven, therefore He so orders things, that all may be for the salvation of the good.

(Here relate the story of the poor man Lazarus, and of Joseph, who was sold by his brethren, and show, how God so arranged, that their apparent misfortune became a great blessing to them. The following incident is a good example of this.)

St. Francis of Sales was once in a large town, by the sea, and very much wished to cross over the sea, to attend to some business he had to do in another town. But, in order to cross the sea, we must go in a ship. There was a ship just going off, and St. Francis wished to go in it; but the people would not take him. His servant was very angry, because they would not take them. But St. Francis did not grieve about this apparent misfortune, but said: "God has so arranged for our good". And sure enough, the ship went down, and all the people, that were in it, were drowned. So if the people had let St. Francis go with them, he would have been drowned also. So this little misfortune turned out to be a great blessing for him.

33. Does God take care of us also?

Yes, God takes care of us, for from Him come life and health, food and drink, dwelling and clothing, and all blessings both for body and soul.

You have now heard, dear children, that God watches over all, even the meanest little animal, and He watches over us much more, because we are of much more importance than the animals. Therefore Our Blessed Lord said: God has even taken account of every hair of our heads; not even one hair can fall to the ground without God's knowledge and permission. So great is the care God takes of us. God *takes care* of us; from Him we have *life*; for God created you, dear children, and gave

you to your parents. From God you have *health*; He keeps you from sickness, and when you are ill and the doctor gives you medicine: from whom does he get it? Whose assistance is necessary, that the medicine may make you well? From God you have your *food*. Now, tell me, who has given you your food to-day? Your mother. And yet you have said, that God gave it to you. What have you eaten then? Bread, for example, what is that made of? . . . And the flour? . . . And the corn, who made it grow? . . . So then, from whom did your mother get the bread, which she gave you? . . . And it is God also, who gives you *clothing* and *a house to live in*, for He created the stones and the wood, of which your house is built. Your parents gave you clothes, but the flax and hemp and cotton etc., of which your clothes are made, God made them grow; and the wool is from the sheep, and that again God created. So then, who really gives you your clothes? . . .

And from God you have *every good thing both for body and soul*. You have already mentioned some such good things for the body, health, food etc. What does God give you for your soul? He has taken care, that you should be baptized, that you might be a child of God and go to Heaven. God takes care, that you shall be taught; and gives you many things, which are necessary, that you may go to Heaven, which I will explain to you later on.

How much good God is always doing you! How many little children there are, who have to suffer very terrible and bitter hunger! There are even some, who die of hunger! And you have good and plentiful food, and often you are not contented with it. And you are in good health. How many children are sick and in great pain and obliged to lie in bed! Might not God have made you ill also? Then think, how sad is the fate of

a blind man! He can see nothing, neither the pretty flowers, nor the blue sky, nor the shining sun, it is always dark to him. Might not God have made you blind also? And how unhappy you would have been then! And how many poor heathen-children are not baptized, and die and cannot go to Heaven! And if they live, they know nothing about the good God; and you are baptized and can learn a great deal about God, and if you are good, when you die, you will go to the beautiful angels, and to our Heavenly Father in Heaven, where everything is so beautiful, and where you will have such great joy and glory.

See then, how good God is to you, how many good things He gives you! What does a good child do, when anyone gives him anything good? He thanks the giver. You would be sure to thank anyone, who gave you a new book, or a bright shilling. But God gives you far more than this.—Do you also thank Him for it?

One day, when little Bertha came home from school, there was a little basket of beautiful grapes on the table. They were the first Bertha had seen that year; her god-mother had sent them to her. Bertha was overjoyed and cried out ever so many times: “How good my dear god-mother is to me!” It is quite right, said her mother, that you should be grateful to your god-mother; but I must tell you something: God gives you every day your food and very often far better things than these grapes. He gives you every day your life, your health and so many other blessings for body and soul. Why do you think so little about this good God and thank Him so seldom? And why must I so often warn you, not to forget your morning—and night—prayers, and your grace at meals, and so on? Bertha was ashamed and cast down her eyes and promised her mother, that she would thank God better for the future.

So then, dear children; thank God fervently, in the morning at your prayers, for having protected you through the night, and for having kept you in life and health. And in the evening never forget to thank Him most heartily for all the blessings, which He has bestowed upon you during the day. And thank Him also, when you go to your meals, and more especially after your meals.

A child, who does not pray, and does not thank God, is like the animals, which rise up and lie down again and eat and drink, but do not pray or give thanks to God, because they know nothing about God, and such a child ought not to be at the table, but in the stable with the animals. Therefore do not do like that, but pray devoutly morning and evening and before and after meals. And also, when you get anything you like, or when any good thing happens to you, then think of God and thank Him for it.

You have now heard, how many many blessings God gives us; but why does He give them to us?

34. Why does God give us so many good things?

God gives us so many good things, because He is our Father, and a most kind Father.

From whom do you receive the most benefits? Is it not from your father? . . . And why does your father give you so many good things? First, because he is your father. Do strangers give you as much? Now, if your father were a stranger to you, knew nothing at all about you, would he give you as much? No, he gives to you, because he *is your father*. But although he is your father, suppose he did not like you, would he do as much for you? There are some fathers, who do not do nearly so much for their children, because they do not love them so much and are not so good and kind to them. But your father is very good to

you, and loves you very much, therefore he gives you so many good things. Well then, why does your father give you so many good things? Because he *is* your father, and because he is a kind father. Now see, God does much more for you than your father, and why does God do all this? 1st *Because God is your Father.* You owe to Him your life, He watches over you and protects you, in short, He does all, and much more, than a father does for his children. 2nd *Because God is a very kind Father,* who loves you many thousands of times more than your father at home.

How much you ought to rejoice, that you have so kind and so glorious and so good a Father in Heaven! How fortunate you are in having your parents (how unfortunate poor orphans are). But your parents cannot always help you (sickness). When you grow older, you will have to go away from them, and they must die some day. But in Heaven you have a Father, Who can always help you, and Who will never die, He is always near you, wherever you are, and when you call upon Him, He always hears you. Oh rejoice then very much, that you have so great and so good a Father!

35. Since God is so good a Father, what ought we to be?

We ought to be His good children and love Him very much.

Your father loves you and gives you many good things, what do you do then? You love him also. And because you love him, you wish to please him. But when do you please him? When you are a good child.

Now, you have heard, that God loves you much more and gives you a great deal more than your father at home; what must you do for God then? *You must love Him very much,* and if you love Him, what will you not do? You will not do, what grieves Him. What

grieves God? God is grieved, when a child is disobedient, when he is passionate, when he takes the holy name of God in vain, when he quarrels with others, and so on. And what pleases God? God is pleased, when children are pious, when they take pleasure in saying their prayers, in going to church etc. So now, if you wish to be a pious child, what will you do? Pray. What else? *Do what pleases your Heavenly Father.* What pleases Him then? He is pleased, when you behave well to your parents and your brothers and sisters—when you pay attention during the instruction. Yes, dear children, pray well and devoutly to the good God and avoid all wickedness, such as cursing, quarrelling, fighting and so on. When you feel inclined to do anything like that, think at once? No, that would displease my Heavenly Father, I will not do it, and then say some little prayer, that God may help you.

§ 2. Of the angels.

We now come to the most excellent creatures, which God has created, and first, those in Heaven, the angels.

36. Did God create anything else besides the visible world?

Yes, God also created an invisible world, namely innumerable spirits, whom we call angels.

You have heard, that God created Heaven and Earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, the plants etc. All these together are called the *visible world*, because it can be *seen*. Now the Catechism asks, whether God created anything else besides the visible world, and you have rightly answered: “God also created”, etc., well then, who belong to the *invisible world*? . . . Why do we call the angels *invisible*? Because we cannot see them. Why cannot we see them? Because they are *spirits* and have no body (See Quest. 16).

From time to time God has sent angels to men, to announce His will to them. Who can mention an example, of when an angel was sent to somebody? What prayer do you say, when the Angelus-bell rings? "The angel of the Lord announced unto Mary" etc. To whom did God send the angel? . . . Did Mary see the angel? Certainly she did, so you see, it has sometimes happened, that angels have been seen. The angels have then taken bodies, so that men might be able to see them. What did they look like then? . . . Like men, only much more beautiful. Have you ever seen any pictures of angels? . . . Were they not beautiful? . . . But when they have been *really* seen, they were far more beautiful and they shone brightly like the sun shining on a looking-glass.—Why are angels represented with wings? To show, that when God commands the angels to do anything, they fulfil His commands very, very swiftly, more swiftly than a little bird can fly. The number of such angels, whom God has created, is innumerable, that means, the number is so great, that no one could count it.

37. In what state were the angels, when God created them?

They were all good and happy.

All these angels, whom God created, were good and happy. They were *good*. When is a child good? When he says his prayers attentively, when he is very obedient, never quarrels with other children etc. Thus also were the angels good. They loved to pray to God, they always obeyed Him instantly, and they were kind and good to one another. They were also *happy*. When a child is good, his parents love him, and try to give him pleasure, they take him out with them, and they buy him pretty things and so on. The angels were good, so God loved them very dearly and gave them great

joy and pleasure. They were *happy* (See Quest. 2). Yes, the angels were happier and more beautiful, than we can possibly understand.

38. Did the angels all remain good and happy?

No, many sinned and were cast into hell: these are called “devils” or “evil spirits”.

All the angels did not remain good and happy, many of them became very wicked and very miserable. Why was that? Because many of them fell into sin. What does that mean? Adam and Eve sinned, because they ate of the fruit, which God had forbidden them, they did not obey God. So, when we say, many of the angels sinned, we mean, they did not obey God. Because they were so beautiful and so happy, they became proud, and were not willing to obey God any longer. Was not that wicked and ungrateful of these angels, whom God had loved so much, and to whom He had been so good? . . . Must not God (humanly speaking) have been greatly grieved at this? You also are base and ungrateful, when you commit sin, that is, when you do not obey God, for instance, when you tell lies, when you steal little things etc., for God loves you also very much and gives you so many blessings, and yet you are sometimes disobedient to Him. So then, because so many angels were wicked, God punished them, *they were cast into hell*. What is hell? It is a place, where the bad angels (and bad people) have to suffer very, *very* frightful pain. In hell it is exactly the contrary to what it is in Heaven. Do you recollect, what those who are in Heaven, have? They have no sufferings and every happiness. In hell the wicked have no happiness and every suffering. By-and-by I will tell you more about that, but at present I will only say, that the wicked in hell are in everlasting fire. If you were only to hold your finger for a little

while over a burning candle, that would hurt you; but if anyone were to throw you into the fire, how terribly you would suffer! Yet, the pain would soon be over, for you would soon die. But in hell the wicked are in the fire day and night, always, always; and they never die, and the pain never ceases. O dear children, what a terrible punishment!

The angels, who sinned, are in hell, they are no longer good spirits, but *wicked spirits* or *devils*. Before they sinned, they were so beautiful, much more beautiful than anything you have ever seen, but now they are so ugly and so frightful, that we should die of fright, if we could see them. Before they sinned, God loved them as His children, now He loves them no longer, indeed He abominates them—hates them. Formerly they were so happy and joyful, and now they are so wretched and suffer such frightful pains. What has made this vast difference, what has made them so hateful and so wretched? Sin, dear children; keep yourselves from sin. When you commit sin, you do the same as the devils did; when you commit a mortal sin, then you become like unto the devils, wicked and odious like them, and then you will one day go, where they are, to hell.

39. How are the good angels disposed towards us?

The good angels love us, and pray for us; and those among them, that have the special charge of protecting us, are called “guardian angels”.

What is meant by the question in the Catechism: *How are the good angels disposed towards us?* If I ask you: How are you disposed towards one of your companions? I mean; Do you like him, or do you dislike him? Are you kind or unkind to him? What does the Catechism mean then, when it says: How

are etc.? . . . The good angels *love us*, and wish us well. Therefore they guard or protect us, protect us from what? From harm. They protect us body and soul. What harm could happen to your body? You might fall down; or cut yourself or be ill, or meet with many accidents, so your guardian angel guards you against these things. In the morning, when you first wake up, he is already there by your side and he never leaves you the whole day through. You would very likely have met with many more accidents, if your guardian angel had not protected you. And at night, when you are asleep in your little bed, your guardian angel watches over you, so that no harm may happen to you. And the good angels guard us in soul also. What harm could happen to our souls then? We might commit sin. How does your good angel guard you from falling into sin? Perhaps you have gone sometimes into the room, where your mother keeps the fruit, or you have seen something nice, and the desire has come upon you to take some. Would that have been right? What would you have committed? . . . Well! has it not seemed as though some one whispered to you softly: That is not right, you must not steal; God sees you, my child? Well, that was your guardian angel, who warned you and so guarded you from committing sin. And because the angels *guard* us in this way, they are called *guardian angels*. Well then, why are they called guardian angels? . . .

Everybody has such a guardian angel: you have your own guardian angel, and you, and you, etc.

How very good God is to us then! Now see, a kind and loving father sends some one with his child, when he has to go a long journey, lest any harm should happen to him on the way. And our loving God acts in the same way, for He gives to each one of us a holy guardian

angel, to take care of us, so that nothing bad may happen to us.

There was once a good, pious youth, whose name was Tobias, who had to go into a foreign country a long way off. Only think, if you had to go a long way away from your parents all alone! So God sent a holy angel with him; but Tobias did not know the angel, because he appeared just like a man. So the angel went with Tobias and helped him in every thing, and showed him the right road. One day they came to a large piece of water, and Tobias bathed in it. All at once a great fish darted after Tobias and would have devoured him; but the angel guarded and helped him, so that the fish could not do him any harm.

A few years ago, a fire broke out during the night, in a village down in the country, and two little girls were asleep in a little room at the top of one of the burning houses, and they did not wake up, until the roof of their room was beginning to fall in, and the stairs and all were in flames. It seemed impossible for the children to be saved, when the eldest girl said, from the bottom of her heart: "Holy guardian angel, help", and she sprang out from the third floor down on to the hard frozen street. Everyone thought she must be dashed to pieces by the fall, but her guardian angel had protected her, and she was not hurt at all; then she cried out to her little sister, "Annie, jump out, I am not hurt at all"; and the little sister also jumped out and was saved. Who was it then, that had guarded the children from harm in this wonderful way? . . .

And in our own neighbourhood something similar happened. A few years ago, there was such a terrible storm and so strong a wind, that the largest trees were torn up by the roots, loaded waggons were overturned, and great strong men were caught up into the air and

dashed violently down again and very much injured. And there was a child out in a field, and his parents could not go quickly enough to fetch him home. Everyone thought he must be dead. But, behold! whilst great strong people were so badly injured, this poor little child was found, after the storm was over, quite safe and well; his guardian angel had taken care of him.

I could relate many such stories to you. Your guardian angel has also protected you many times from danger both to body and soul. That is why the Catechism asks:

40. What is your duty towards your guardian angel?

It is my duty to honour my guardian angel, to thank him and to obey him.

Since your guardian angel does so much for you, then you must also do something for Him. What must you do?

1. You must *honour him*. How can you honour your guardian angel? By praying to him. When your mother goes out, she entrusts your little baby sister to the servant, she tells her to take care of her. Your Heavenly Father has also entrusted you to the care of your guardian angel, so you should pray to him every night and morning, when you say your prayers, and ask him to take care of you and to protect you, and to keep your heart free from sin, that means, that you may commit no sin; and when that is the case—when you commit no sin, then you are always pleasing to God, then God rejoices in you and loves you very much.

2. You must also *thank* your guardian angel. You always thank anyone, who gives you anything—an apple or a little book, and so on. Well, your guardian angel gives you much more than this, he does much more for you. What ought you to do then? You ought to thank him most heartily. How can you thank your good angel

best? How do you thank your parents best? By doing what? By obeying them. You must then obey your good angel also.

3. *Obey him.* Does your guardian angel tell you to do anything then? (See Quest. 39.) He *warns* you, when you are inclined to do anything wrong (for instance to steal little things, or to be rude), he also encourages or inclines you to be good, when he whispers to you in your heart, to say your prayers, to obey your parents etc. Now, when your guardian angel thus inwardly warns you or encourages you, you must obey him willingly, gladly, joyfully and quickly.—Say to yourself: my guardian angel is warning me, I will obey him, then I shall please him and go to Heaven. But if you disobey your guardian angel, you grieve him, and he does not protect you so well, and he complains of you to Almighty God.

§ 3. Of our first parents.

You have now learnt, dear children, first, that God created Heaven and Earth and all that they contain; then I spoke to you in particular of the creatures, that God had created in Heaven, namely the angels; you are now going to hear about a certain creature, that God created on Earth.

41. Which is the noblest creature of God on Earth?

The noblest creature of God on Earth is man.

What is meant by the noblest creature? If I say the Town Hall is the noblest building in the town, what do I mean? I mean: it is the first, the handsomest, the principal building. Then when I say: Which is the noblest creature of God on Earth? I mean, which is the first, the principal, the best of God's creatures on Earth? But are not the angels more important and more noble than men? Certainly they are, but then they are not God's creatures on Earth, but in Heaven.

Mention some other of God's creatures on Earth. . . Now, can you show me, in what way man is better and nobler than the animals? What has man, that the animals have not? A rational soul. I will tell you more about that by-and-by. But even as regards the body, man is much better and more beautiful than the animals. Animals move along with the head bent downwards, looking on the ground; but man walks erect, upright, and his eyes are turned towards Heaven.

Why is that? That is, because the animals are in the world to serve man here on Earth, to seek for their food on the ground etc. They know nothing about Heaven, and they do not go to Heaven. But man is in the world to know God, to serve Him, and to go to Heaven; therefore he has his eyes directed towards Heaven.

Men have hands (almost all the animals are without hands), with which they can work and make clever and ingenious things, such as animals could not make. What different things can men do with their hands? . . . And man has a tongue, with which he can speak. The animals also have a tongue, but they cannot speak. Only think, dear children, if you could not speak to your parents and to your little brothers and sisters—could not say, what you wanted, or tell them anything that had happened to you, how unhappy you would be! If you were to go into a foreign country and the people all spoke another language, and you could not understand them, nor they you: would you not feel very lonely and miserable, and soon be longing for home? How sad it must be to be dumb! Well now, God has given you the power of speech, that you may please Him by your words. So when you say wicked things and offend God, what do you deserve? What does a child deserve, who, when his father has bought him a pretty knife, makes use of it to cut and spoil his father's beautiful trees.

Does he not deserve to have the knife taken away from him? Well, and so does a child, who offends God by saying wicked things, deserve, that God should take away from him the power of speech—should make him dumb.

42. How did God create the first man?

God for meda body out of the dust of the Earth, and breathed a soul into it, and thus the first man was created.

So God first took some *Earth* and *formed*, made a *body* with it; but the body was, as yet lifeless, without life. It had feet, it is true, but it could not walk, and so on, because it was not living. What was wanting to it then? *The soul*. Then *God breathed into it a soul*, and now the body was living, there was a soul in it; before it was only a human body, not a whole human being, now body and soul together made a human being: thus *the first man was created*.

You said God breathed a soul into the body; now, with what do you breathe? With your mouth. Has God a mouth then, with which He can breathe? . . . Why not? . . . Then, why is it said here: God breathed a soul into it? Two things are meant by that: 1. When you breathe, do you see anything? No, the breath is invisible; and the soul also is not, like the body, visible, but invisible. 2. The breath comes from you, comes out from you. Where does the soul come from? It does not come, like the body, from the Earth, but it comes from God. God did not make it of the dust of the Earth; but created it out of nothing.

43. Of what is man composed?

Of a body and a soul.

How did you say God made the first man? . . . What did He form first? . . . What was added to it after-

wards? . . . Of what two parts then was the first man composed? . . . We also are composed of a body and soul, like the first man. We are therefore men, human beings like him. Of what two parts then are we composed? . . .

You know what the body is, because you can see it: head, hands and feet, and so on. What you can see of a man, that is the body. But,

44. What is the soul?

The soul is an immortal spirit, created after God's own image and likeness, without which we can neither think nor live.

Now, what has been said about the soul? That it is a spirit. What sort of a spirit? An immortal spirit, because it will never die. What more has been said about it? That it is made after God's image and likeness, and that without it, we can neither think nor live. All these points I will explain to you one by one.

The soul is a *spirit*; as you have also learnt, that God is a spirit; we cannot see the soul, as we can the body, nor hear it, like the wind, nor smell it, like the perfume of a rose etc. But still we can know, that there is a soul in a body: how is that? If you go into a house, and you do not know, whether there is anyone there or not; you look about you and notice, that there is a fire burning in the grate, or you hear, in the next room, the noise of a sewing-machine or of a rocking-chair or of a piano: and now, you know there is some one there, who is causing those sounds. So also, when you see, that a man moves, and works, and so on, you know, that he has a soul, for without a soul he could not do that. Why?

Because *without a soul we could not live*. Have you ever seen a dead person? Could it walk or work or

Speak? . . . Yet it had hands and feet and a tongue? When once the soul has gone out from the body, the body is dead and can do nothing whatever. But when the soul is in the body, then it is living and can see, and speak, and move etc. What is it, that enables man to do all that then? . . .

Again, without the soul we *cannot think*. When the sun shines bright, the animals feel the warmth, as well as we do, and they can see the sun; but they cannot ask or consider, where the sun comes from, or why it shines so beautifully.—But *you* can understand and know, that God made the sun, and that He makes it shine so beautifully, because He loves us and provides for our good. The animals cannot think, you can think. When the farmer ploughs the land, the horse is obliged to draw the plough; but he does not know, why he must draw it; why the land has to be ploughed etc. Whereas the farmer knows; he says: I must plough the land now, so that I may be able to sow the seed, and later on reap the harvest, that we may have bread to eat. Animals cannot think, man can think. And why cannot animals think? Because they have no soul (at least not of that kind, which is an immortal spirit, such as men have), they have no understanding, they cannot know or *understand* anything.

But there is still something more, which you can do with your soul, which the animals cannot do. There were two children, Mary and Rosa; now, Mary said her prayers diligently every morning and evening, and also when she went to Mass and Benediction, and she was very obedient and industrious, but Rosa neglected her prayers, chattered with other children, when she was in church, and was disobedient and idle at her work. Now, why did not Rosa pray? Was it because she could not? Had she no understanding, no strength for work?

What was wanting? The will. She was not willing. Did any body compel her to talk in church? No, she *would talk*. And did any body compel Mary to pray? No, she did it of her own accord or will. We have then in our soul, besides our understanding, our *free will*, we can will to do good or to do evil. We can obey God, or not, we can be good, or we can be wicked just as we please. Animals cannot do that. When a dog is hungry and he sees a piece of meat, he cannot help wishing to have it, and he springs upon it and eats it, if he is not kept back by blows etc. But you might be very hungry indeed, and see the most beautiful apples or any other nice things, and you could leave them undisturbed and think to yourself, "It is not right to take them; I will not do it." You have then a free will.

Now, since the animals cannot think, they know nothing about God, and cannot pray to Him. So when a child does not pray, what is he like? . . . Yes, like an animal, in fact, worse than an animal, for, why does not the animal pray? Because he cannot. Why does not the child pray? Because he will not, he is too idle (See Quest. 33).

Will you be children of that sort? . . . So when you get up in the morning, or you go to bed at night, or you sit down to your meals, and you feel rather idle, then, say to yourself: No, I will not be like the cows or the pigs, that get up and go to the trough to feed, and lie down again without prayer; I will say my prayers.

But there is still something more in the Catechism about the soul. It says, that *it is created after God's image and likeness*. People often say, that child is the very image of the father. What do they mean by that? They mean he looks just like his father, that he has eyes, hair, features etc. just like his father. (He

is not equal to his father, because the father is big and the child is little etc.) Now, what do we mean, when we say our soul is made after the image and likeness of God? We mean, that it is created like unto God. What is God? God is Omniscient, that means, He knows all things. Man knows, through his soul, many things, certainly not everything, like God, or he *would be equal* to God; but yet he knows a great many things; therefore he is *like* unto God. Animals know nothing, so they are not equal to God, and not like unto God. God is Almighty, that means, He can do all things, whatever He wills. Man cannot do everything, whatever he wills, but he can do many things, therefore he is not equal to God; but he is *like* unto God. God is Eternal, He had no beginning and He will have no end. Your soul had a beginning, so it is not eternal, otherwise it would be equal to God; it had a beginning, but it will have no end, it will never die, it is therefore *like* unto God.

Yes, dear children, you are like your Father, the great and glorious God in Heaven. Your soul is an image of God, not a dead or inanimate image or picture, made of paper, that man has made, but a living image, that God Himself has made. If you had a very beautiful picture, would you not take great care of it, that it should not get soiled or spoilt? Your soul is more beautiful than the most beautiful of pictures, it is the image of God. Take great care then, that you do not stain it or spoil it.

But you will stain your soul and make it odious and ugly, if you do wicked things, such as stealing or cursing and swearing, or if you think or do anything wicked, which you would be very much ashamed for anyone to know of. And if you act thus with the image of God, do you think God will not punish you?

If another child were to spoil a beautiful picture of yours, would you not be very much offended? Would not such a child deserve to be punished? And do you think God will not be offended, if you spoil His beautiful picture, your soul? And that He will not punish you? Always remember then, that your soul is the image of God, and never stain it by sin.

45. You say your soul is immortal; will it not die then, when your body dies?

No, my soul will never die.

When anybody dies, what happens? The soul goes forth out of the body, and the body is then dead, and it is buried in the Earth, and goes back again into dust (God made it out of dust). But the soul, does that also die? Is that also buried? No, it lives on for ever. Everything that you now see, will one day be destroyed: trees, animals, houses, even the highest mountains, and the stars, the sun, the moon, all will one day perish. But the soul will never perish. How far superior we are to the animals! They know nothing about God, and when they die, all is over with them, they do not go to Heaven. But your soul will live always, for ever, even when the whole world will have passed away. Your own body also will die (it is true it will rise again), but the soul will never die. Of which must you take most care then, of your body or of your soul? . . . Why? . . .

46. What were the names of our first parents?

Adam and Eve.

At first God created a man and called him Adam, which means Earth, for his body was made of the Earth. But Adam was alone, he had no one for a companion; so God created another human being, Eve.

47. Were they good in the beginning?

Yes, in the beginning they were very good; they were just and holy.

When is a child *good*? (See Quest. 37.) What did Adam and Eve do then? They loved God, and loved to pray to Him, they obeyed Him in all things, they agreed well together etc. They were *very good*. They never committed the smallest sin in thought, word or deed.

Adam and Eve were *holy*. Where are the holy people or the saints? In Heaven. What kind of people are in Heaven? Those, whom God does not love? No, those, whom God loves very much, those, in whom He takes pleasure, those, who, on Earth, loved and practised, what is good and shunned and hated evil. They are called holy. We say God is holy, and that means: God wills or wishes only, what is good, and He hates, what is evil.

Adam and Eve were then, as you have heard, very good. Their souls were pure and beautiful; so beautiful, that God Himself took delight in them. Therefore God loved them, as a good father loves his children, and even more. They were His good, dear children, and He wished finally to take them up to Heaven, still living.

Adam and Eve were also *just*, having what is called original justice. Since then Adam and Eve were good, they were also happy, as the answer to the following question will show.

48. Were they also happy?

Yes, they lived in great happiness in the earthly Paradise, and were never to die.

They were perfectly happy, they were never ill, they had no sufferings, nothing ever happened, which caused them any pain. They never suffered from hunger or thirst, nor from heat or cold, they never had to work

hard, were never tired, they were never obliged to learn wearisome tasks at school, they had no one to vex or annoy them. They had many, many joys, they lived in a beautiful garden, which is called paradise, earthly paradise, that is, paradise on Earth, because sometimes people call Heaven paradise. In this paradise there were most beautiful trees and plants with the sweetest and most delicious fruits, far better than any you have ever seen, all of which God told them they might eat of, except one. On the trees there were the most lovely birds, and they sang so beautifully, and there were numberless beautiful animals in paradise. Now, at the present time, there are many animals, that are savage and dangerous, and do harm to man, sometimes they even kill people. The animals in paradise were not like that. They did no harm to Adam and Eve, they were quite tame, and they all obeyed Adam and Eve, and came, when they called them. And Adam and Eve were kind to each other, and loved one another. They knew nothing whatever of evil, and God loved them and conversed with them, and was a kind Father to them.

And just as a child is happy and joyful with its dear mother, who tells it pretty tales, and does everything to give it pleasure, so, Adam and Eve were happy and joyful with God, Whom they loved so much, and Who was so good to them.

And they were never to die. When they had lived good and happy lives in paradise for a certain time, God would have taken them, body and soul, into Heaven. Now, however good a man may be, nevertheless he must die, his soul goes to Heaven, but his body is buried in the ground and does not go to Heaven until after the judgment-day.

But if Adam and Eve had not sinned, their souls would never have left their bodies; but their bodies

would have gone with them straight to Heaven. Now, what do you think it was, out of all these things, that made Adam and Eve so happy in paradise? Do you think it was the pretty garden they lived in, or the delicious fruits they were allowed to eat? No, because after they had sinned, they still remained sometime in this beautiful paradise, but they had no more pleasure in it. Why? Perhaps one of you may have once done something wicked secretly, perhaps stolen some sugar, or some apples, or pears, or broken something, and not told your mother. How did you feel after you had done that? Did it not seem, as if something said in your heart: "You are wicked", and you were afraid your father or your mother could see, by your looks, what you had done. That is, what people call having a bad conscience. And Adam and Eve had a bad conscience like that, which left them no peace, but was always saying to them: "You have done a wicked thing, God will punish you." Thus they were no longer happy and joyful.

Why was it then, that Adam and Eve were so happy before? They were happy, because they were good and obedient children of God, and had a good conscience, and because God loved them so much.

And a child is only really happy, as long as he remains good and obedient. On the other hand a child is never really happy, when he is wicked, even if he have all the most beautiful things he can wish for. Because then something says to him inwardly, "You are a wicked child, God no longer loves you, and He will punish you," and such a child cannot be really happy and joyful.

You see then, that Adam and Eve were good and happy in paradise; but,

49. Did they always remain good and happy?

No, they sinned, for they ate of the forbidden fruit, and were punished.

They sinned, how? They ate of the forbidden fruit. They had then done something, which God had forbidden them to do; and so had disobeyed God. They had broken God's commandment. Who sins then? He, who does anything that God has forbidden, he, who does not keep God's commandments. What has God forbidden you, for instance? What may you not do? He has forbidden you to curse and swear, to steal, to stay away from Mass on Sundays without necessity, to hate or ill-treat your neighbour; and so on. So then, if you do any of these things, you disobey God.—You commit a sin. And what has God commanded you to do? He has commanded you to pray, to obey your parents etc., And if you do not do that, you commit a sin.

How did it happen, that Adam and Eve fell into sin? Eve had gone to the tree, of which God had forbidden them to eat the fruit, and when the serpent called to her, she listened to him and talked with him. She ought not to have gone there at all. A good child never goes, where he may be tempted to sin, he does not go into a room (if he can avoid it), where he is easily tempted to steal little things. A good child does not listen, when a wicked companion calls him, and so on. Again, when the serpent began to talk wicked things and to say, Eve should not obey God; what ought Eve to have done? She ought to have gone away immediately and thought to herself, "God sees me", and she should have prayed to Him to help her; then she would not have sinned. What should you do then, if another child wanted to say wicked things to you, or to persuade you, for instance, to steal or to be in any way wicked? You

should immediately go away and say to yourself: "God sees me", and then pray to God to help you, that you may not commit a sin.

At last Eve ate of the fruit and gave some to Adam, and he also ate of it. Now, what ought Adam to have done? He ought not to have eaten it, and he ought to have told Eve, that it was not right to disobey God. Do you think, my child, that you may steal or do any other wicked thing, because your brothers and sisters do it? No, you must say: That is not right—I must not disobey God.

Adam and Eve then disobeyed God, this was very wicked and ungrateful of them. God had loved them so much, and had given them so many good and beautiful things, and had made them so happy; and yet they had obeyed the devil rather than God. Do you think it does not grieve a father and mother, when their child is not thankful to them, but is even very wicked? Certainly such a child offends and grieves his parents. So also did Adam and Eve offend God. Was it not base and ungrateful of them, to grieve and offend God in return for all He had done for them? Well, God loves you also very much, and He gives you a great many blessings. When you commit sin, then you are ungrateful, wicked children, like Adam and Eve, and you grieve the good God. Will you do that? Will you ever again, fight, or steal, or tell stories or use bad words?

When a child is wicked and disobedient, he is punished, for instance: his parents deprive him of something, which gives him pleasure, such as his play-things etc.; or he has to suffer something, perhaps a whipping. In both these ways Adam and Eve were punished by Almighty God, because they were disobedient.

50. How were they punished by God?

They were banished from Paradise, and obliged to endure many hardships and, at last, to suffer death.

They were *banished from paradise*, driven out of the beautiful garden. Now, there was an end to all the pleasures, which they had formerly enjoyed, and they had many *hardships* to endure. What are hardships? When a man says: this is very hard work, he means work, which gives him a great deal of trouble. So it means then, they had to bear many toils and hardships, many troubles and anxieties, hard work, vexations, pains and sicknesses. They had to work hard and to bear the summer's heat and the winter's cold, and, at last, they had to *suffer death*, that is to die. So severely did God punish our first parents, whom He had loved so much before, for this one sin, and if God had not had mercy on them, they would have gone to hell after their death, and would have been punished there for their sins for all eternity.

Now think, how Adam and Eve must have wept, and how grieved they must have been, when they were driven out of their beautiful paradise, and banished from the sight of God! And they must have felt, that it was through their own fault. Think, how it would be with you, if you had been very wicked, and your parents were to send you away, and say: "Go away, you wicked child, and never let us see you again!" and you were obliged to go amongst strangers, and to be poor and forsaken, and to have very much to suffer! You would think: O, how happy I was at home, and now, I am so wretched, and I may never dare to go to my parents again; and it is through my own fault! Still more sad must Adam and Eve have been.

When you hear, that a child has been very severely beaten by his father, who loved him so much before, you think, that the child must have done something very wicked indeed, or his father would not have punished him so severely. You have now heard, how severely Adam and Eve were punished by such a good Father, by God. What must you think then? You think, they must have done something very wicked indeed. And what had they done? They had committed one single sin. So see, how terrible sin is, and be very careful, that you do not fall into sin, otherwise God will punish you also very severely.

51. Did this sin injure Adam and Eve, our first parents, only?

No, sin and its punishment descended upon all men, so that now every one comes into the world, burdened with sin.

This sin *injured* Adam and Eve very much indeed, and not them alone, but all mankind also. What injury then did this sin of our first parents cause? 1. They were no longer good and holy, but wicked and sinful; God was no longer pleased with them. 2. They were severely punished, banished out of paradise, had to bear many sufferings and, at last, to die, and they could no longer hope for Heaven. Thus Adam and Eve incurred a double injury by their bad act, namely they became *sinful* and they were *punished*. (Sin and punishment.) But these injuries, these miseries did not fall upon Adam and Eve only, but upon all mankind. *The sin and the punishment descended upon all men*; all inherited the sin and the punishment from Adam, because Adam was the father of all men. All men come from, or are descended from Adam. You are descended from your grand-father and so on, and all men are descended from

Adam, and they come into the world with the sin of Adam upon them. They are sinful, and God has no more pleasure in them. They also must suffer many hardships and must die (Quest. 50) and cannot go to Heaven, if they die with this sin upon them. So the Catechism says, that *we all come into the world* burdened with sin or *with sin fastened upon us*. Not fastened on our bodies, but firmly fixed on our souls, and we cannot free ourselves from it.

Then, dear children, how many sufferings, how much misery there is in the world! You have not yet had much pain perhaps.—Probably some of you may have suffered a little from tooth-ache, or you may have had a bad cold, or may have hurt yourselves by falling down. But when you are older, you will understand better, how many sufferings there are in the world.

Have you ever had anyone very ill in your house, who had to suffer very great agony, and who groaned and cried very bitterly? Well, there are many thousands of sick people in the world, who have to suffer frightful pain. How many also are there, who are poor and hungry, and who would be glad to eat, what you do not like, or even what you perhaps throw away or waste.—And have you never heard in the cemetery, when anyone is buried, how bitterly the children, brothers or sisters, or parents of the dead person have cried? It is almost always so, when anyone dies, and yet there are many thousands of people dying every day, and all this great misery, all these pains and sufferings, what do they come from? From sin. If man had not sinned, we should all have lived happily, like Adam and Eve in paradise. So then, mark well, dear children, that all pain, all suffering, all unhappiness, comes from sin. Therefore you must fear sin more than anything, for it is sin only, that can make you really unhappy.

52. What do we call this sin, in which we are all born?

We call it original sin, because we inherit it from our first or original parents.

You have heard, that even little children, when they come into the world, have this sin upon their souls. But can little babies then commit sin, break the commandments of God, for instance, tell untruths, or steal, and so on? No, they know nothing yet about the commandments of God. Little children have therefore no sins, which they themselves have committed; but they have one sin, which they bring with them into the world, which has passed on to them from Adam and Eve. This sin is called *original* sin, because we inherit it, it has come to us from our *original* parents, that is from the parents, from whom all mankind descend.

When a parent dies, his house, his property, his money and everything, which belonged to him, comes to his children. People call that *inheriting*, that is coming into possession of the property, which belonged to their parent; they have the property, which they themselves have not earned by their own labour.

But people can also inherit bad things, such as when a father is ill, and his children take the sickness from him, are sick also, then people say, the children have inherited their father's disease, that is, it has descended upon them from their father. We have all inherited a sickness of the soul from Adam, namely sin. When we first come into the world, we are in sin, God is displeased with us, and we must all suffer many pains and miseries.

53. Could we have gone to Heaven with the stain of original sin upon our souls?

No, without a Redeemer no man could have gone to Heaven.

Only those, who are good and holy, can go to Heaven; but through original sin all men are wicked and sinful. Only those, in whom God is well-pleased, go to Heaven, and God is not well-pleased with those, who are in original sin; therefore those, who are in original sin, cannot go to Heaven. So since all men are stained with original sin, no one could have gone to Heaven without a Redeemer. What does that mean? The word Redeemer comes from to redeem, or to ransom, to set free. When a little bird is enclosed or bound in a cage, he cannot fly away, until he is let loose. In the same way all men have, as it were, their souls bound down by original sin, and we could never have gone to Heaven, if some one had not loosed us, set us free.

Now, because God saw the misery of men, He had compassion on them, not wishing them to be lost, but, on the contrary, to receive them again as His children, so that they might one day be happy with Him in Heaven. Therefore He promised Adam and Eve, before He drove them out of paradise, that He would send them a Redeemer, who should free them from original sin, and from other sins, so that they might once more hope for Heaven.

Now, do you think, men obeyed God better after He had been so good to them? No, they became worse and worse. Even Adam's own son Cain killed his brother Abel. And later on, men had become so wicked, that God deprived them all of life, destroyed them all, with the exception of one just family, by a great flood. But all these punishments of God did not do much good; men became more and more wicked, and the greater part of mankind entirely forgot God and became so foolish, and so wicked, that they prayed to images made of wood and stone (such images are called *idols*), or to the sun, or the moon, or the stars, and they said, these images were gods.

Such people are called heathens (Quest. 12). And some of them thought, if they washed themselves very often, or killed a great many serpents and lizards, they should go to Heaven. Were they not foolish? The wisest of these heathens did not know nearly so much about God, as you do already.

And being so very stupid, and having forgotten God, they were also very wicked. They tormented and harassed one another, and committed sins so great, that we dare not even name them. And they were frightfully cruel towards their poor children. Many parents, not being willing to bear the trouble and expense of bringing them up, murdered them, as soon as they came into the world, or threw them into the streets, or laid them in the woods, where the poor children either died of hunger, or were frozen to death, or were devoured by wild beasts. In one town the heathens had an idol made of iron, which was hollow, and they made a great fire in it, so that the idol was quite hot. Then they laid the children in the burning arms of the idol, so that they were burnt to death. O dear children, was not that a frightful death?

But the grown up people were still more wretched, they tormented and harassed one another, as I have already told you, and they lived in frightful sin. They had very much to suffer, and they knew nothing about our Heavenly Father; they did not pray to Him, and they could not call upon Him to help them. They knew well, for their conscience told them, that they had sinned grievously, and deserved great punishment, and that it would go ill with them after death; but they knew nothing about a Redeemer, who might free them from their sins, so they lived a wretched life and died a still more wretched death, and after death! O children, that is the most terrible! The heathens, who lived and

died thus, are gone to hell, where they will be tormented for ever and ever.

And it would have been the same with us also, and with all men, for men had well deserved, that God should punish them, they had so deeply offended Him. But God, who is infinitely merciful, did not punish the wicked as they deserved, but had mercy on them. He was so good to man, who had so deeply offended Him, that He sent His own dearly beloved Son down from Heaven, that He might, through His most painful death, redeem man from sin and the punishment of hell. Oh, how good, how very good God is!

God had already promised this Redeemer to our first parents, and later on, He sent holy men or prophets several times to tell the people, that He would send them a Redeemer, and that they were to hope in Him, and keep God's commandments. But men had to wait very, very long for the Redeemer, and the few good people, that there were then, had a very great longing for the Redeemer to come soon, that the people might be freed from their sin and misery. At length, 4000 years after Adam and Eve sinned, the Redeemer came and brought to all mankind peace, happiness and joy.

I will tell you a great deal more about this Redeemer, but, first, I must draw your attention to one thing. There are in the world, at this present time, many such heathens as I have been telling you about, in fact, many more than there are Christians; and many of these heathens still treat their children in a very shocking manner. In one country, many thousands of miles from here, where the people are still heathens, many of the parents still throw their children into the streets, where they are devoured by the dogs and the swine.

O, how happy you are, dear children, compared with these poor heathen-children! Might not God have let

you also come into the world among these heathens? Then you would have been as unhappy as they are. But God has given you Christian parents, who love you, and take such good care of you. Then you have been baptized, and you know about our dear Lord and Saviour, and if you obey God, you will go to Him in Heaven. Have you ever heartily thanked God for sending you a Saviour, and for giving you Christian parents, and permitting you to be baptized, and made a Christian? When you say your prayers at night, you should always thank God for these great blessings.

And you can thank God in another way also. Do you not pity these poor little heathen-children, I have been telling you of? Would you not help them, if you could, so that they might not be killed, but be baptized, and become Christian children? You can, at least, do something for them, you can say a Hail Mary for them every day, at your morning prayers, that God may grant them the grace of baptism; and you might, if your parents allow you, give out of your pocket-money a penny a month. The money will go to good priests, who go into those heathen-lands far away, and take these poor heathen-children, and baptise them, and bring them up, and instruct them in the Christian faith. They very often need the money, to buy them of their parents; and to provide food and clothing for them. If you do, what I say, pray every day and give money once a month, you will belong to the society of the Holy Childhood.

I must tell you, there are many thousands of Catholic children, who unite together in saying the Hail Mary, and giving the penny a month, and they do this in honour of the Infant Jesus; therefore they are called associates of the society of the Holy Childhood. Now, to do this, only requires, that you should spend a penny

less every month in sweets, and get out of bed a few minutes earlier every morning; and if you do this, it is probable, that, in a couple of years, you may have saved one poor heathen-child from being killed, and been the means of its being baptized and of its going to Heaven. Oh, how beautiful it would be, if one day you were to go to Heaven, and a child were to meet you there, and to thank you for having been the means of its being baptized, and going to Heaven! Therefore do this, if you can, dear children, and, at all events, *pray* for the poor heathen-children.

FOURTH TRUTH. OF GOD THE REDEEMER.

§ 1. Birth of Jesus.

We have now come to the fourth truth, which a Christian must believe, namely, that God the Son became man and redeemed us by His death upon the cross.—

54. Who redeemed us?

Jesus Christ.

You have heard, dear children, that God had promised mankind a Saviour or Redeemer. This Redeemer came and freed mankind from sin and its punishment. Jesus Christ is this Redeemer, His name is a most holy name, for God Himself commanded by an angel, that the Saviour should be called Jesus, as we see from the Bible Story. It is the name, taken by the Lord of Heaven and Earth, when He came to be our Saviour. Without this Saviour we must all have perished.

This and similar passages are not to be understood in the sense, that it could be in the purpose of God to leave all mankind to perish, but in the sense, conveyed by the words of Scripture "There is no other name under Heaven given to men, whereby they must be saved". Nor is it even to be understood, that, if the Son of

God had not come into the world to save us, all mankind would have shared the fate of the rebel angels, but that all would have forfeited that happiness—the beatific vision, for which God had created man.

You should always use this holy name with great reverence, and you should always bow your head, when you pronounce the holy name of Jesus, to show, that you honour and love Our Blessed Saviour.

55. Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is the only-begotten Son of God, who came down from Heaven into this world, and became man for us.

Jesus Christ is the *only-begotten*, that is, the only Son of God. If you had no brothers or sisters, you would be the only son of your parents. So Jesus Christ is the only Son of God; God has no other Son besides Jesus Christ. He existed from all eternity with God the Father in Heaven. But in order to save us, *He came down from Heaven into this world and became man.* I will explain this by-and-by.

Nobody, dear children, but the Son of God, could have saved us, and God gave His only Son to save us, poor creatures, from sin and hell. I will tell you a story, which will make this clear to you.

A rich nobleman had a servant, to whom he had been very kind; but the servant did not obey him, on the contrary, he grieved and offended him very deeply. At last the servant was put into prison for his crimes, and was going to be put to death. Then his master had compassion on him and wished to set him free. He would have given a great deal of money to save him, but that was no good. It was necessary, that some other person, some one, who was entirely innocent, should suffer the punishment of the servant, die instead of

him, otherwise the servant could not be free. Now the master had an only son, whom he loved more than all the world besides, and this only son he gave up to be put to death, so that the life of the wicked servant might be spared. Must not this master have had an exceedingly great love for his servant? Still greater was the love of God for us. We are all, dear children, the servants of God, and we have offended and grieved Him very much. God might have cast us down into hell, we had deserved it, but God had compassion on us and wished to save us; and therefore He gave His only Son, whom He loved most dearly, for us, His poor unhappy creatures. We often pity parents, when they have a sick child, when it suffers great pain, and they know it must soon die; they would willingly give all they possess, if only they could save their child. Now, God loved His Son many thousands of times more than all parents love their children, and yet He gave Him up, and He knew beforehand, that this, His dear Son, must suffer the most cruel torments, and, at last, die upon the cross. Since then, God loved us so much, ought not we also to love so good a Father and try to please Him all we can?

56. Is Jesus Christ true God and true man?

Yes, Jesus Christ is, at the same time, true God and true man.

That means: Jesus is *both together*, He is God, and He is also man, and it is really *true*, that He is God, it is not merely said so, and that He is man, He did not merely look like one.

What is your father N.? Is he an angel? No, he is a man. You are his son; so you are a man or have the nature of a man, also. Therefore of whatever nature the father is, the son is of the same nature.

Now, the father of Jesus Christ is God, therefore Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God also.

Then, as Jesus Christ is God, He must be Omniscient (know all things), Almighty (able to do all things), Eternal (without beginning and without end). And Jesus Christ really was so. He told the people what they were thinking of (Judas), and told beforehand many things, which came to pass afterwards, sometimes many years afterwards. Can a mere man do that? Why not? Who alone can do that (of his own power)? God. Why? Because He is what? . . . What was Jesus Christ then?

Again: Jesus Christ did things, which I shall tell you of later on, which no mere man could do, for instance: He only said to the sick: "Arise", and the sick people were healed; and He merely said to the dead, who were already in the grave: "Come forth", and the dead came to life, and came forth out of the grave. Can a man do that? Who alone can do that?

But Jesus Christ is also *true man*. People could see Jesus. The shepherds saw Him in the crib, the Jews saw Him in the temple. And what did He look like then? Can any one see God? So if Jesus Christ had been only God, could anyone have seen Him? . . . What was He also then? . . . Jesus Christ saw with His eyes, spoke with His mouth, felt hunger and thirst, ate, slept, suffered pain, and died. Could He have done that, if He had been only God? Who sees with eyes, speaks with a mouth, feels hunger etc.? Men. So then what was Jesus Christ? . . .

Jesus Christ is also God. How long has He been God? From all eternity (See Quest. 13 and 14). He has always been God, He never had any beginning. Has He always been man also? No, He *became* man,

57. How did the Son of God become man?

He took a body and a soul like ours.

Of what is a man composed? Of *a body and a soul*. Then what must Jesus Christ have had, since it was His will to become man? He must have had a body and a soul. But had He a body and a soul from all eternity? No, at first, He was only God. When therefore it was His will to become man, it was necessary, that He should *first take* a body and a soul. He became a man such as we are. Could He have taken another sort of body, different from what we have? No, to become man, He must take a body and soul like ours. He had therefore a body like our body, eyes, hands, feet, and so on. He had a soul like ours, with which He was able to *will* and to *think*; but His soul was much better and more perfect than our souls are. He knew far more than the cleverest and wisest of men, He knew all things, which man is capable of knowing. He was like unto us in all things, sin excepted, He endured poverty and pain and suffering, and at last died on the cross.

58. How long is it, since the Son of God became man?

Nearly two thousand years.

Who can tell me, how many years have passed, since Our Saviour was born? What year is it now? The year—since the birth of Christ. So then, how many years have passed since the birth of Christ?

59. Where was Christ born?

In a stable at Bethlehem.

(Relate the Bible Story.) In this story of the birth of Jesus, which you have just heard, there are a few things, which you must especially notice.

1. The Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph had knocked at many doors in Bethlehem, and begged the people to let them have a lodging; but they were everywhere met with a refusal. The people would not take them in. Oh, how that must have grieved Our Blessed Lady and the dear St. Joseph! Would it not grieve you very much, if your father were to send you to some of your relations, and you thought they would receive you with pleasure, and they would not have anything to do with you, would not take you in, and you were obliged to go out again in the cold, dark night, without knowing where to go? Now, see, dear children, these people were men, whom Jesus Christ had created, and whom He loved so much, that He came down from Heaven to redeem them, and they would not so much as give Him a shelter on this cold, bitter night. They had plenty of room for rich people, but no room for Him. Was it not wicked of these people? Now, dear children, Jesus wishes to dwell in your hearts and bring you many blessings; but you close your hearts against Him, when you allow sinful thoughts to remain in them; for in the heart, where sin is, Jesus will not dwell. Promise Him, therefore, that you will let no evil dwell in your hearts.

2. Think, dear children, how painful it must have been to Our Blessed Lady and to St. Joseph, to have to take refuge in a poor wretched stable. However poor a mother may be, she has almost always some little bed or cradle, on which to place her new-born infant; but the dear Infant Jesus (to whom the whole world belonged) had only straw for His bed. Usually only animals are placed upon straw, when they first come into the world. Thus Our dear Lord, whilst He was yet a very young infant, suffered severely from cold and many privations. Perhaps the parents of many among you are poor, and you may perhaps have

to wear very old clothes, and to suffer from cold in the winter, and so on. Yet see, dear children, you are not nearly so poor as the Infant Jesus was; so when you see other children, who are better off than you, or when you are cold or hungry, then think: The sweet Infant Jesus was also poor, and He suffered so much for me; I will therefore bear my poverty patiently for the love of Him. Blessed Hermann Joseph was very poor, and often had to go to school hungry. At such times he would kneel down before a statue of the Blessed Virgin, with the Infant Jesus in her arms, and say: „Dear Infant Jesus, I have only had a very little piece of bread for my breakfast, and I am still very hungry; but I will be content, for you are the Son of God, and yet *you* also have suffered from want”. And then he went cheerfully to school. So you too, dear children, if you are poor, should also be content for the love of the Infant Jesus. And if your parents are rich, you should never despise poor people, who are obliged to wear shabby clothes, but pity them and ask your parents leave to give them something if you can. Remember Jesus also was poor, and He said, if you despise poor people and make game of them, it is just as bad as if you despised and insulted Him. But, on the other hand, if you do good to poor people, you please Our dear Lord just as much, and you will receive from Him just as great a reward, as if you did it to Himself.

3. How much Jesus must have loved us! There was once the son of a rich and powerful king, who had a great affection for the son of a poor labourer, and he heard, that the labourer's son was very ill; then this prince left his beautiful house, and his soft bed and good food, and so on, and went to the poor labourer's little house, and stayed with the sick child, and took care of him, and lay upon straw, and had only very

poor food; and when the child was better, he took him home with him to his father's palace. Must not this noble prince have loved this poor sick child very much? and must not the child have loved him in return, and been deeply grateful to him? Now, dear children, Jesus has loved us much more. He came down from the beautiful Heaven, where the angels are, because all the people were sick, with the sickness of sin, in order to help us; and He became poor, even poorer than the poorest of us; and He will take us, when we are cured in our souls, to be with Him in His beautiful Heaven. You should then love the Blessed Infant Jesus, and pray to Him, and thank Him most heartily for all His goodness to us.

4. There is a certain feast, on which we ought more especially to think of the Infant Jesus, and to thank Him and rejoice in Him. That is the feast of Christmas. We think of the Holy Night, when Jesus was born in a stable. Children often get presents on Christmas-Day, because Jesus came into the world as a little child. These presents are to remind us, that the sweet Infant Jesus brought to all men beautiful gifts from Heaven (I will tell you more of these later on), and also that we have to thank the Holy Infant for every good gift, which God gives us. That is, why people say, it is the Holy Infant, who sends you your Christmas-gifts. Of whom should these gifts remind you then? Do you know, why people have little cribs in the churches and in their houses on Christmas-Night?

Now, what happened, when Jesus was born?

60. After the birth of Jesus, who came to adore Him?

First came the good shepherds from the fields near by; then came the three wise men or the three kings from the far East.

First, namely before other people knew as yet of the birth of Jesus, these good shepherds came, who were watching their sheep not far off from the stable. Then later on came the *three wise men*, namely three very learned men, who knew a very great deal. They were, at the same time, *kings*, and had many subjects to rule over. Their names were Gaspar, Melchior and Balthasar. They came *from the east*, that is from the land, which lies far away, where the sun rises in the morning. They came to *adore* the Infant Jesus. They knew, that the Holy Infant was the Son of God, and the Saviour, and therefore they prayed to Him as one prays to God, and they thanked Him and begged Him to give them also the good gifts of His grace, and to take them also to Heaven. And they brought Him presents. The shepherds were poor people, but, no doubt, they willingly gave the best they had to the Holy Infant, such as milk, fruit, etc., and we may be sure, He would have been graciously pleased to accept their offerings. You cannot do much yet for Jesus, because you are only poor children; but you can say your prayers attentively, and obey your parents well, and when you do this, you make a very acceptable offering to Jesus.

But the three kings were rich, they brought the Holy Infant gold, frankincense and myrrh. Gold is yellow and shining, like the chalice and the monstrance in the church; some of our money is made of gold; a gold-piece of the size of a farthing is worth more than nine hundred farthings. Frankincense or incense—you know what incense is. It is little yellow grains, which are put into the censer on burning coals; then it sends out a kind of smoke, which smells very nice. Myrrh is a bitter resin, like that which runs out of the fir-trees, when they are cut in the spring of the year, when that

is put into a dead body, it prevents the body from corrupting, or smelling offensive.

Gold, frankincense and myrrh were three very costly presents. You cannot give them, but you can offer something similar to Our Blessed Lord. You offer Him gold, when you give some of your own money or food to a poor person; incense, which ascends up to Heaven, when you gladly and devoutly lift up your little hands to Heaven and pray; myrrh, when you keep yourselves from sin, because through sin the soul becomes corrupt and offensive like a dead body.

The shepherds and the three holy kings were the first to go to the new-born Infant Jesus and to adore Him. But how did they learn, that Jesus, the Son of God, had come into the world, or, as the Catechism says:

61. How did the shepherds and the wise men know of the birth of Jesus?

The shepherds knew of the birth of Jesus through an angel, and the wise men through a miraculous star.

(Relate the Bible story.) Now, why were these shepherds and these wise men permitted to come to the Holy Infant, why they more than the rest of the world? Because the shepherds were *good*, they thought very much about God, and loved Him and prayed to Him very often; and the three kings likewise had a great desire to see the Saviour, Who had been promised, and when God gave them a sign through the star, they *obeyed* directly, and travelled all the long, long way to Bethlehem, guided by the star, and enlightened by God. So whom does God love best? . . .

How happy the shepherds must have been, when they saw the lovely Infant Jesus and were allowed to take Him in their arms! How you also will rejoice one day, when you see the Infant Jesus, not in the stable, but

in Heaven! Be good then and obedient, and you will one day go to Him in Heaven. (It might here be pointed out to the children, that the Infant Jesus is more especially present in the church, and they should behave as reverently in the church, as the shepherds did at the crib.) Every child, that comes into the world, has a mother. So the Infant Jesus also had a mother.

62. Who is the mother of Jesus?

The mother of Jesus is the Most Holy Virgin Mary.

The mother of Jesus is named Mary. She brought Our Blessed Saviour into the world, she carried Him in her arms, and fed Him, whilst He was still a little infant, just like every good mother does her child. She is called the=*Most Holy Virgin*, which means the holiest of all (just as when we say the biggest boy, we mean the biggest of all the boys). All those, who are in Heaven, are holy, the angels and the saints are holy (Quest. 2). But Mary is more holy and more glorious than all the angels and saints.

Now as Mary is the mother of Jesus and Jesus is God :

63. What is she therefore called?

She is called the Mother of God.

Mary is the mother of Jesus, but Jesus is God (Quest. 56). So then of whom is Mary the mother?... I will tell you a great deal about the Blessed Virgin by-and-by. Since she brought the dear Infant Jesus into the world, and took such loving care of Him, we ought to be very grateful to her and honour her very much. She loves us all, and she loves more especially all good children. She is our Heavenly mother. And as you love your mother at home and try to please her, so you should love Mary and try to please her also. And because Mary is the Mother of God, God

willingly grants whatever she asks of Him. Therefore when we wish to obtain any grace from God, we do well to go first to His mother and ask her to obtain it for us. There is a little prayer, by which we more especially honour the Blessed Virgin. We often say it after the "Our Father". What is it called? The Hail Mary, or the angel's salutation. Why? . . . How does it begin? . . . Who spoke those words to Mary? Who saluted her thus? . . . How devout the angel Gabriel was, when he spoke those words to her! So, dear children, whenever you say the Hail Mary, you should remember, that you are saluting her, as the angel Gabriel did. I dare say a great many of you know what the Angelus is. In Catholic countries (and in convents in England) a bell is rung three times a day: early in the morning, and at 12 o'clock or mid-day, and again in the evening, to remind people to say this prayer, and people ought to say it with great devotion, every time the bell rings, whether they are at home, or in the streets, or wherever they are. We say the "Hail Mary" three times, and before each "Hail Mary" we say a few words. Can anyone repeat the Angelus? "The angel of the Lord" etc. What should we think of, whilst we repeat this? We should think, that the Son of God became man for the love of us poor sinners, and was born of the Virgin Mary. Therefore whenever you hear the Angelus-bell, repeat this prayer devoutly, wherever you may be, whether you are at home or in the streets, and intend by this to thank Our Blessed Saviour for becoming man for us.

You know now, who the mother of Jesus is; but,

64. Had Jesus any father?

As man Jesus had no father.

Jesus Christ was God and man. As God He had a father, namely God the Father, but as man He had no father.

65. Who was St. Joseph then?

St. Joseph was only the foster-father of Jesus.

So then Jesus had no human father, but do we not always see a man in all the pictures, which represent the birth of Jesus? Yes, St. Joseph. Was he not the father of Jesus? No, St. Joseph was only His foster-father. Now, if your parents were to die, and you were to go to your god-father, and he were to give you food, and to bring you up, would your god-father be your real father? No, because you would not owe your life to him; he would only be your foster-father, because he fostered you, or took care of you, the same as your father had formerly fed you and taken care of you. So also St. Joseph was not the real father, but only the foster-father of Jesus, because he fostered and took care of Jesus; for he worked (What sort of work did he do? Of what trade was he?), and earned money, just as your father does, and he took care, that the dear Child had food to eat, and clothes to wear, and everything needful. Jesus loved St. Joseph very much, so we also should love him, and often pray to him.

§ 2. Life of Jesus.

I have told you, who Jesus Christ is, how and where He was born, and what happened at the time of His birth. Now I will tell you something about the *life of Jesus*, and some of the things, which He did during the thirty three years, which He lived upon Earth.

66. What happened to the Child Jesus on the fortieth day after His birth?

On the fortieth day the Child Jesus was presented in the temple at Jerusalem.

(Relate the Bible story.) What is the meaning of presented? You may perhaps have heard people say:

If I get cured, I will make a present of a wax-candle to the church, that means, I will out of gratitude to God give a wax-candle to be used in that church during the service, burned in God's honour. So when we say, that Jesus was presented in the *temple*, the church, where the Jews held divine service, we mean, that the Blessed Virgin took Him there and presented Him to God. For God had commanded, that every mother should bring the first little boy, that God sent her, into the temple at Jerusalem and there offer Him to God. It was just as though the mother said: "Heavenly Father, Thou hast given this child to me, he belongs to Thee, I therefore give him back to Thee". Every mother was really obliged to leave her child in the temple for the service of God, only God permitted, that the mothers should take their children back home again with them, and leave some little offering for the use of the temple instead. So Mary took the Child Jesus to the temple, and returned thanks to God for having given Him to her, and offered Him back again to God.

But it was very different with the Child Jesus and the Blessed Virgin, from what it was with other mothers and their children. Other children have no use of their understanding, do not know anything, when they are only forty days old; but Jesus knew everything, knew, that in years to come He would suffer and die for the salvation of man. Therefore He offered Himself up, whilst He was still such a very young child, to His Heavenly Father, and it was as if He said: "Beloved Father! Thou hast willed, that I should become man for the salvation of man, I will faithfully do Thy will, and I offer myself up now to suffer all that is necessary for the redemption of man". And Mary knew even then, that Jesus was the Saviour, and that He would suffer and die; for holy Simeon told her, what great sorrow

was before her. This certainly grieved her very much, but she nevertheless said: "Blessed God, Thou gavest the Child Jesus to me, and I give Him back to Thee; and since it is Thy Will, that He should suffer and die, may Thy holy Will be done, and although it grieves me to the heart, yet I am content, that it should be so". So you see Jesus, even at this very early age, suffered much for us, and His Blessed Mother also suffered on our account; should we not then be very grateful, both to Him and to her?

Who can tell me, what feast we keep in remembrance of Our Lord being presented in the temple? . . . The feast of the Purification on the 2nd of February, which is commonly called Candlemas-Day. Why is it so called? Because on that day the candles are blessed, which are to be used at Mass during the year. Why is it especially on that day, that they are blessed? Because it was on that day, that Jesus, *the light of the world*, came for the first time into the temple.

So then on the fortieth day after His birth the Child Jesus was in Jerusalem. Did He remain there?

67. Did the Child Jesus always remain in Jerusalem?

No, Joseph and Mary fled into Egypt with the Child, because king Herod sought to kill Him.

Joseph and Mary *fled*; what does that mean? If a dog is going to bite you, or a bad boy wants to beat you, you run away, you flee from the dog or from the bad boy. So Joseph and Mary *fled* with the Child Jesus, they went a long way off into a foreign land, called Egypt. From whom did they flee? From king Herod. It was to him, that the three holy kings went and asked, where the new-born king of the Jews was, as you know from the Bible story. Then Herod was afraid and thought, that the Child Jesus would become a king like himself,

and that then he would no longer be the king of the Jews. (Jesus was not an Earthly king like Herod; but the Heavenly king.) Therefore Herod *sought* to kill the child, he *sought*, that means, he tried very much, he took a great deal of trouble to take away the life of the child, to kill Him. But as he did not know, which was Jesus (he only knew, that He was to be born in Bethlehem), he sent a great number of soldiers to Bethlehem and commanded them to kill every little boy, who was under two years of age. He thought, that Jesus would be sure to be amongst them. But God had already taken care, that He should not be there. He had sent an angel to Joseph to tell him, to take the young child and His mother and flee into Egypt with them. So the soldiers were not able to kill the Child Jesus, but they killed all the other little baby boys in Bethlehem. How cruel that was! And how the fathers and mothers of these poor children must have wept, when the children were snatched from their arms, and when they saw them lying dead on the ground!

The innocent children, who thus suffered death for Jesus, are now in Heaven happy for ever with Jesus. When Jesus sends you anything to suffer, when you are ill or in pain, or when you are cold in church, then you must also suffer patiently for the love of Jesus, so that you may one day rejoice with Him and those innocent children in Heaven.

68. Where did Jesus live after His return from Egypt?

He lived in Nazareth in the house of His parents, until He was thirty years of age; and He was subject to them.

When the wicked king Herod was dead, an angel appeared again unto Joseph and told him to take Jesus and Mary and return home, to go back again to their

own country. So they went back again to the little city of Nazareth, and Jesus lived there, until He was *thirty years* of age, in the *house of His parents*, that is of His mother and of His foster-father, St. Joseph, and *was subject to them*, that means, He obeyed them. You know in every country there is some one person, who reigns over or rules all the others; in England it is the king or the queen, who rules; all the others are subjects and must obey. And so Jesus was subject to His parents and obeyed them. All that His parents told Him to do, He gladly did. He did not require to be told twice; but He obeyed at once. And He obeyed willingly, He did not murmur, but gladly and cheerfully did, what Mary and Joseph told Him to do. Do you remember, what Joseph was by trade? . . . Did Jesus help His foster-father and work as a carpenter too? . . .

69. Why was Jesus, the Son of God, subject to others?

He was subject to others, in order to teach children to be obedient to their parents.

Jesus was the Son of God and was Himself God. Was He then obliged to be subject or obedient to man? Why was He so then? Because He wished to *teach children obedience to parents*, that is, to show, that all children must obey their parents. For if the Son of God, the Lord of Heaven and Earth, was obedient, surely children, who are only poor miserable human beings, should be still more so. So if you wish to be like the Holy Child Jesus, to follow His example and to please Him, what must you do? . . . And how must you obey? You must obey willingly and cheerfully. But if you do not obey, or if you murmur and are unwilling, if you put on a disagreeable look or contradict your parents, then you will not please the Holy Infant and you will not go, where the obedient Infant Jesus now dwells.

What is the greatest good, that could happen to you? It is, that you should go to Heaven. Now, who are those, who go to Heaven? Only those, who are obedient. Our obedience pleases God and leads us to Heaven. Even the Son of God was obedient; therefore obedience is surely something very great, and we must not feel ashamed to obey, if the king of Heaven himself obeyed. And why does He now rule in Heaven? Because He obeyed on Earth. So we also shall one day be happy and glorious in Heaven, if we have been very obedient on Earth.

70. What did Jesus do, when He was twelve years of age?

When Jesus was twelve years of age, He went up to Jerusalem with His parents and remained there; after three days they found Him in the temple.

(Relate the Bible story.) Why did Jesus remain in the temple for three days, when He knew, that His parents would be in great anxiety about Him? Because He wished to set another good example to children. He wished to show them, that they ought to be glad to go to church, and how they should behave, when they are there. Jesus had to walk a great many miles to get to the temple, and when He arrived there, He prayed with the greatest possible devotion. He did not look about, or play, or talk, or idle away His time; the time did not seem long to Him. You have only a short distance to go to church. Are you also pleased to go? And how do you behave, when you are there? Do you kneel down devoutly and keep your eyes fixed either on the altar or on your prayer-book? Jesus knew everything and did not require to hear any sermons or instructions, and yet He listened most attentively, when

the priests and teachers in the temple spoke of God. Are you as attentive to the sermon or to the religious instruction? It is so necessary for you, because you know so little about God as yet, and besides you remember your Catechism says: "God made me *to know* Him"; you must then listen attentively so as to learn to know God. Jesus is still in the church; He sees you and when you pray devoutly and are attentive, He is pleased with you, and loves you and is pleased to give you all you ask of Him. But if you play about, and laugh and do not pray, He is angry with you and He will punish you for it, sooner or later.

Now, all that you have learnt up to the present about Jesus, you are reminded of in the beautiful prayer, which you all know so well, the Rosary. Why is this devotion called the Rosary? Many good children, on their mother's birth-day, try to please her by giving her a nosegay, or a wreath of flowers, and they make it of the most beautiful flowers they can get, and especially of roses, which are considered to be the best flowers, or of such others as they know their mother likes best. Mary is our Heavenly mother, so we bring her a wreath of spiritual flowers, which grow, as it were, in the soul, a wreath of such pious prayers, as are the most beautiful of all, and those, which give her the most pleasure. Now look at this Rosary. First, there is a cross, and we begin by making the sign of the cross (for the reason see Quest. 26). Then come one large bead and three small ones. We say the creed on the cross, then one "Our Father" (the most beautiful prayer, which Jesus Christ Himself taught us), and then three "Hail Marys". Then come five decades, each having one large bead and ten small ones. We say at each decade one "Our Father" and ten "Hail Marys". Why do we say the "Hail Mary" so often? Because that is the prayer, which

pleases Mary the most, the salutation, with which the angel saluted her; and whilst we repeat these prayers, we think of what Mary loves the most, her divine Son, her Heavenly Child, whom she conceived of the Holy Ghost, and then we think of what Jesus suffered for us, and, lastly, we think of His glorious Resurrection, His Ascension into Heaven, and of His Sending down the Holy Ghost upon His apostles, of His mother's Assumption into Heaven, and of her being gloriously Crowned by her Divine Son. These things, of which we think, whilst we repeat the "Hail Marys", are called the Mysteries of the Rosary. Who can say them to me? There are three sets, each containing five mysteries. The first five are called the "Joyful Mysteries", because they relate to the things, which give the most joy to our Blessed Mother, and in which we also should rejoice (point out each single mystery). The rest of the mysteries we will consider later on.

Now, what should you think of, when you say the first mystery? . . . Of what, when you say the second etc.? . . . Always say this beautiful prayer with great devotion, that the Blessed Virgin may take pleasure in it as in a beautiful wreath of flowers. You should also intend by this prayer to thank God for sending us the Saviour, and to thank the Blessed Virgin for having been His mother, and you should always try to please the Holy Infant and His blessed mother.

71. What did Jesus do, when He was thirty years of age?

When Jesus was thirty years of age, He began to teach publicly and to work miracles.

Jesus remained in the house of His parents, until He was thirty years of age; then He began *to teach publicly*, that is, He taught the people quite openly, publicly, so

that every one could hear Him, who wished; He did not teach only a few scholars in a room, as you are taught here, but He taught in the church and in the open fields (Sermon on the mount, Sermon from Peter's boat). And He began, when He was thirty years old, to *work miracles*, that is to do wonderful things, which no mere man of his own power could do. I shall tell you more about these miracles later on.

72. What did Jesus teach?

Jesus taught all that we must believe, hope and do, in order to be saved.

You are taught many things at school, to read, to write, to reckon etc. Did Jesus teach the people these things? No, Jesus came from Heaven, to redeem mankind from sin, therefore He came to make them leave off being wicked and become *good, to make them holy*, so that they might be able to go to Heaven. And in order that they might become good and holy, Jesus taught them:

1. What they must *believe* (Quest. 4). He told them a great deal about God, how good He is, that He is the Father of all mankind, and that He loves us all very much, that He hates and punishes sin, and that the Son of God came down from Heaven to save man etc. So the people learnt to know God better, and to love Him, and to desire to please and obey Him.

And in order that they might obey God the more readily, Our Saviour taught: 2. What they were *to hope* for. Your father wishes you to learn your lessons for school diligently. In order that you may learn them the more readily, he promises you something and says: If you know your lessons quite well, you shall have a present or be allowed to go out walking etc. Well, you learn industriously and think: When I have finished, I shall have that present. Now, that is *to hope*, when

you are sure to get something good, which has been promised to you.

So then, when do you hope for anything, for instance for a new coat? You hope, when you think what? . . . Your father says: If you do not obey, you will be punished. Do we say, you hope for punishment? . . . Why not? Because that is nothing good, but something bad. You do not hope for a bad thing; you fear it.

So Our dear Lord taught us, what we were to hope for, that is, what God has promised us, if we keep His commandments. He told us, how dearly God loves all, who obey Him, and how much good He does them, gives them such beautiful things, and, at last, He gives them the best and most beautiful gift of all, Heaven. But when can we obtain Heaven? When we do, what God wills. So Our Saviour taught us:

3. What we were *to do*. He told the people, how they were to pray, how they were to love one another, that no one was to do any injury to another, that they were to help the poor etc.

If we believe everything, and hope and do everything, that Jesus taught us, we shall become already in this world *good*, and in the next world, happy.

Jesus taught us, all that I have been teaching you, up to the present about God, and all, that I shall teach you later on, and if He had not said it, I should not have known it and so could not have taught it to you. So you should be as reverent and as attentive during the instruction, as if you were listening to Jesus himself, as if He were himself giving you the instruction.

Jesus taught the people and He worked miracles (Quest. 71). I have explained to you, what Jesus taught: Now I must tell you about the miracles, which Jesus worked.

73. What kind of miracles did Jesus work?

With one word He calmed the winds and the waves, healed the sick, and raised the dead to life again.

Jesus once went out on a large lake in a ship, with His disciples or scholars, whom He had always with Him. A lake is a large stretch of water. The lake, on which Jesus was sailing, was a great deal larger than the whole of our town, it took six hours to go all the length of it in a boat, and two hours to go across from side to side. Think, if from here to N. instead of fields etc. there was nothing but water, would not that be a very great quantity of water? Well, Jesus went on this great lake in a boat. Do you know, what a boat is? I have here the half of a nut-shell: if I place it thus on the water, it will not sink, but swim on the top of the water. Now, think of a box made of wood, many hundreds of times larger than this nut-shell (if possible a drawing should be shown here) and much longer, so hollow and so big, that there would be room for twenty or thirty men in it; that would be only a little boat. Well, Jesus was with His disciples in a little boat, such as I have been describing, and He was very tired and went to sleep. All at once, a very strong wind sprang up, which heaved up the waters in the lake, so that they rose to a great height, almost as high as this room, and then fell deep down again in the lake. The disciples were afraid the water would wash over the sides of the boat, and cause it to sink, and that they would be drowned. Filled with fear, they awoke Jesus, and Jesus only stretched out His hand and said to the waves and the wind, "Peace, be still"; and immediately there came a great calm. *Jesus therefore calmed the winds and the waves with His word*

alone. Now, do you think, 'if there was a strong wind blowing and you were to say' "Peace, be still", the wind would obey you? Nay, if all men, even the most powerful, were to stand all together and say to the wind "Peace, be still", would it obey then? . . . Who alone can do this? Jesus had therefore worked a miracle; He had done something, which no man (of himself) could do, something, which only God could do. (The story might be told here of the curing of the man, who had been sick for 38 years, and of the raising of Lazarus from the dead.)

But cannot the doctor cure sick people, make them well again? Yes truly, but how does he cure them? Does he merely go into the sick-room and say to the sick person; "I say unto thee, arise?" No, the sick person very often has to lie in bed for a long time, to take a great deal of medicine etc., and then get well gradually, slowly. Did Jesus cure people like that? . . . Again, the doctor cannot cure all sick people, but only those, whom it is God's will should be cured, and even these may get ill again later on.—And when a person is dead, can the doctor bring him to life again? . . . But Jesus with only a word cured all the sick, who it was His will should be cured, and with only a word, He raised the dead to life again. No mere man can do that of himself; only God can do that. So these acts, which Jesus performed, were miracles.

74. Why did Jesus work miracles?

To show, that He was the Son of God.

Jesus had said: I am the Son of God, you must believe my words and keep my commandments. If He had done no more than say that; what would the people have said to Him? If a stranger were to come and say to your father: "I am the son of that merchant, to

whom you owe a hundred pounds, you must pay me the money," and your father did not know him: would he give him the money directly? No, he would say: "Prove to me, that you are the son of the merchant and that your father wishes me to pay you this money etc." In the same way, the people would have said to Jesus: "Prove to us, that you are the Son of God, otherwise we shall not believe in you (we see nothing particular in you, you look to us just like any other man etc.)." How did Jesus prove, that He was really the Son of God? He worked miracles, that is, He did things, which no mere man could do, which God alone could do. Then the people could see plainly, that Jesus was really the Son of God, and they knew, that we must *believe* in Him and *obey* Him.

§ 3. Death of Jesus.

Having now told you the most necessary points in the life of Jesus; we will go through, what the Catechism tells us about the death of Jesus, that is how Jesus died.

75. Why did the Son of God become man?

The Son of God became man, that He might be able to suffer and die for us; because as God He could neither suffer nor die.

You have now heard, how the Son of God became man and came into the world as a little child, what He did in His youth, and how He taught the people later on, and proved to them by His miracles, that He was the Son of God. Why did He do all this? Why did He become man? He became man, in order *to be able to suffer* (to bear pain) and *to die* for us. Could He not have suffered and died without becoming man? No. Why not? What was Our Lord, before He became man?

He was God. As God (that is as long as He was only God and not also man) *He could neither suffer nor die.* Why not? . . . You already know something of what Jesus suffered. Mention some of His sufferings. . . Yes, He was crucified. If He had been God only, could He have been nailed to the cross, could holes have been bored through His hands and feet? . . . Why not? Has God hands? . . . God cannot suffer, cannot undergo pain, because He is perfectly happy (Quest. 2). God cannot die, because He is Eternal (Quest. 13). He is not composed of a body and soul, so that the soul could go out of the body, as it does with us. You see therefore, that, if Jesus had remained only God, He could not have suffered and died. But He wished to suffer and die in order to save us. Therefore He became man, took a body and soul like ours (Quest. 57) and so was able to suffer and die.

76. Why did He wish to suffer and die?

He wished to suffer and die, that we might be saved from our sins and obtain eternal happiness.

Jesus wished to save us, to loose us from our sins (Quest. 53) and to make us happy, make us able to gain Heaven; that is why He wished to suffer and die.

Imagine, dear children, that a poor man is cast into prison, shut up in prison, because he cannot pay his debts; he is therefore bound and so long as he is not loosed again, set free, he cannot return to his home, to his wife and children. And even if he could go home again, he would find nothing there, but want and misery. Now a kind, rich man comes and pays his debts for him, and so sets him at liberty, opens the door of his prison. Besides that he gives him a house etc., and so the man, who was so poor before, is now very well off and can live very comfortably. Jesus has done the same for

us, through His sufferings and death, He has paid our debts and set us free, and purchased Heaven for us, so that we can now (if we will) be happy for all eternity. What are the debts, which Jesus paid for us? From what has He set us free?

77. From what did Jesus save us by His sufferings and death?

He saved us from sin and from eternal damnation.

All men come into the world with one sin upon their souls. What sin is that? . . . And men had added to that a great many frightful sins, which they themselves had committed, and by which they had very grievously offended God. God was so displeased with them, the sins they committed were so hateful in His sight, that He withdrew Himself from them. What had they deserved? When you do anything wicked, what do you deserve? . . . What punishment had men deserved for their sins? (Where do they go, who die in mortal sin?) . . . They had deserved to go to hell, where they must have suffered the most frightful torments for all eternity. They had deserved to be damned for all eternity, *eternal damnation*. So men were guilty of sin and were condemned to eternal punishment. From both these terrible evils they must be saved, if they were ever to please God again, and ever to go to Heaven, and somebody, who was perfectly good and innocent and holy, must make reparation for their sins and suffer the punishment for them. No mere man could do that, because no mere man, was perfectly good and holy. Now if you and your companion, were to fall into a deep pit or into the water, could you pull your companion out, or yourself out? . . . Thus all men were in sin, and no one could free himself, much less anyone else. Sin is so frightful, and so hateful to God, that no man, and

no angel even, could make reparation for it, or take the punishment of it upon himself. So all men would have lived in a state of sin and misery, and been damned eternally, if Our Blessed Saviour had not had compassion on them. He came down from Heaven therefore, and atoned for our sins, and suffered our punishment. I will tell you a story, which will make you understand this better.

A certain father had two children. The one, Charles, was his only child; the other, Anthony, he had adopted out of compassion, because he had no parents. Charles and Anthony went a long way off to school and only came home four times a year. The father told them, that whichever of them brought him a good report at the end of the quarter, to show that he had been good and diligent at school, should have some new clothes and a good deal of enjoyment during the holidays; but if either of them had been wicked and idle, then that one would be severely punished. At the end of the quarter the brothers came home; Charles brought an excellent report from his master and also a pretty book, which had been given him, because he had been so industrious and obedient; but Anthony had a bad report; he had been very idle, and had committed many very great faults, for instance, he had broken two of the school-room-windows out of malice, that is, on purpose, not by accident. The father took Charles kindly by the hand, praised him and said: I am very pleased indeed with you; to-morrow you shall go with me into the town and have the pleasure of spending a whole day with your cousin; and, at the same time, you shall choose some new clothes, which I will buy for you. But as for Anthony, the father met him with a sad and angry countenance and said, "go from my sight, I will not allow you to be in my presence, you shall go away to live among strangers. I will no longer own you for

my child, and the money to pay for the broken windows shall be taken away from what would be coming to you". Anthony cried bitterly and promised to learn his lessons better for the future, but nevertheless he was obliged to go sadly out of the room. The good Charles felt the deepest compassion for his brother, and went up to his father and said: "Dearest father, I beseech you to forgive Anthony and to let him return for my sake. I have obeyed you and I will gladly forego any reward for it, if you will only forgive my brother; I will myself bear the punishment, which he has deserved. The money for the broken windows I have already paid out of my pocket-money, and to-morrow morning I will cheerfully stay at home and do without the new clothes, if only you will forgive my brother." His father embraced him with tears in his eyes and said: "I will willingly grant your petition, my dearest child; your obedience and your brotherly love give me so much joy, that I will no longer remember the trouble, which Anthony's bad conduct has caused me. He shall be forgiven." Then Anthony thanked his father and was much more obedient for the future, and he was always most grateful to his good brother for all he had done for him, and he thanked him and tried to do all he could, to please him.

Now, dear children, just as Anthony was the adopted son, so were all men the adopted children of their Heavenly Father; and they did not obey their good Father, but offended Him very grievously by their sins, and He would, at last, have banished them altogether. But His own Son, Jesus Christ, prayed to His beloved Father for them. He had been obedient to His Heavenly Father; He had been obedient even to the death of the cross, and He pleased the Father so much, that He had more joy in His Son, than He had grief on account of

the sins of men. And Jesus took upon Himself all the punishment, which men deserved by their sins; He suffered all the torments, which they deserved. And so Our Heavenly Father, for the love of Jesus, forgave us, loosed us from the punishment of eternal damnation, and consented to receive us at last into our Heavenly home.

How glad and how thankful we ought to be, that Jesus has saved us! How glad Anthony was, in the little story I have just told you! He thought to himself: I have so deeply offended my good father and now, I am to be sent away from his house, where I have been so happy, and I am to go amongst strangers, where I shall be very miserable. And then, all at once, his father forgave him and took him back to be his dear child once more; what joy! O dear children! It would have been much worse with us! We should have been banished for ever out of the sight of the great and glorious God, and condemned to suffer for ever the most dreadful torments. And through Jesus, God has pardoned us, has taken us back again as His dear children. We are saved from hell, and Heaven is promised to us. Rejoice then and thank Our dear Saviour every day of your lives; I will tell you later on, in what way you can thank Him.

Jesus saved us by His sufferings and death, because by them He fulfilled the will of His Heavenly Father; He took our punishment upon Himself; He suffered instead of us.

78. What did Jesus Christ suffer for us?

Jesus Christ suffered very many and terrible pains and, at last, death upon the Cross.

Jesus Christ suffered many terrible pains for us. From the time of His birth, from the time when He was in

the crib, even up to the time of His death, He suffered pains so many and so terrible, as never man had borne before. We think over or meditate upon the principal sufferings, which Our Lord endured for us in the last days of His mortal life, when we say the sorrowful mysteries of the Rosary: Can you tell me what the first sorrowful mystery is?

1. *The agony in the garden.* On the night, when the Jews took Our Lord prisoner, intending to crucify Him, He had gone with His disciples into the garden of Gethsemane to pray. There, through excess of anguish, He fell prostrate on the ground, and blood oozed out from His whole body (as perspiration presses through our skin in very hot weather). Dear children, when people are very ill, and are soon going to die, they are in great agony, they suffer terrible pain, and they tremble with fear of death, and from sheer terror they break out into a violent perspiration. Fear and anguish force this perspiration to come out; but what comes out from them, is only water; but Our dearest Lord's agony was so intense, that it caused *blood* to come through the pores of His skin, instead of water. He knew what frightful torments the Jews would inflict upon Him, and that He must soon die. How would it be with you, if anyone were about to take you away from home, and you knew you were going to be killed? Then Our dear Lord saw all the sins, which had been committed by men from the time of Adam up to that hour, and all, that will be committed down to the end of the world, and He knew, that He was now taking all these sins upon Himself, and that He must suffer the punishment of them. Have you ever dreamt, that a ferocious and horrible wild beast was running after you? Were you not dreadfully frightened in your dreams? Now think; for each single sin Our Blessed Lord felt

as great a horror, as you did of the terrible wild beast. And He saw before Him many thousands and millions of such hateful sins, which were all, as it were, rushing upon Him. How this sight must have filled Him with horror! Dear children, He saw, at that moment, all your sins, all the wicked things you have ever done, using bad words, stealing etc., and all that increased His suffering, as He lay prostrate on the ground in the garden of Gethsemane. If you had never sinned, He would not have had so much to suffer. And He saw, how many people, in spite of His sufferings, would nevertheless be lost, go to hell; and as He loved every one of us so dearly, that grieved Him infinitely; more than it does a mother to hear, that her children are to be put to death. Jesus suffered and prayed in the garden of Gethsemane, more especially for those, who forget God and never pray to Him, or who pray carelessly and without devotion. You should think of this agony of Jesus, when you say the first sorrowful mystery of the Rosary.

2. *The scourging at the pillar.* The Jews took Jesus prisoner in the garden of Gethsemane (one of His own disciples, Judas, having betrayed Him), and they bound Him with cords and cruelly ill-treated Him. They took Him before a heathen judge, who delivered Him up to be scourged. Then the soldiers tore off His clothes from His sacred body, and bound Him to a pillar or post, and beat Him with whips. Imagine a whip such as drivers use for their horses, but not with one thong only, but with several thongs, each having an iron spike at the end of it. When the soldiers beat Jesus with these whips, the spikes went into His sacred flesh and tore away whole pieces of skin and flesh, and the blood ran down all over His body. They beat Him, until the whole of His sacred body was, as it were, but one



wound. O, what pain Jesus must have suffered! He suffered this, to atone for the sins of the flesh, which men commit, especially sins of impurity, and drunkenness, and the sins of sloth. If you commit such sins, you also are guilty of the scourging of Jesus. Only think, dear children, if you were to go home now, and find your father and mother lying on the ground, all covered with blood and wounds, and writhing and groaning with pain; would you not be deeply grieved? And if you knew, that it was through your own fault? Jesus, Who ought to be dearer to you than father or mother, has suffered far more, and *you* have caused those sufferings by your sins. Does not that grieve you? Will you ever pain Him again by committing such sins?

3. *The crowning of Our Blessed Saviour with thorns.*

After the soldiers had scourged Jesus, they put a purple garment upon Him, and placed a crown upon His head, to make Him look like a king. (Kings usually wear such garments and crowns, only their crowns are made of gold.) The soldiers did this in mockery, because Jesus had said, He was the king of the Jews. They therefore made a crown out of a branch of a thorn-tree, which they twisted round into a crown and placed upon His head, and, in order that the thorns might hurt Him the more, they struck the crown, when it was on His head, with a stick, so that the great pointed thorns, which were like needles or nails, were forced deep into His sacred head. How painful it is, if you have only a bad head-ache; what pain it would be, if anyone were to stick needles or nails into your head! What terrible pain the crown of thorns must have caused Our dear Saviour then! He suffered these terrible pains to atone for the sins, which men commit with their head, through bad thoughts and through pride. But, what was still more painful to Our dearest Lord than even the crown of

thorns, was, that men, whom He loved so much, should laugh at Him and mock Him. If you were to fall down and hurt your foot, so that it pained you very much, and the other children, even the one whom you liked the best of all, were to stand round and make game of you, would not their mockery hurt you even more than the pain of your foot? O, how much it must have grieved Jesus, that those whom He loved so tenderly, should so shamefully scoff at Him in His frightful agony!

4. *The carrying of the cross.* After Jesus had endured all these torments, He was condemned to death. The soldiers then put His own clothes on Him again, and laid the heavy cross upon His sacred shoulders, and forced Him to carry this heavy cross Himself up the hill, on which He was to die. But Jesus was so weak and so exhausted, that He could scarcely walk, much less carry this heavy burden; so He fell down several times under the weight of the cross. When a horse falls down under too heavy a load, every body has compassion on it, and goes to help the poor animal to get on its legs again. But the Jews had not even as much compassion on Jesus, as they would have had on an animal; for, when He fell down under the weight of the cross, they beat Him and goaded Him with their spears, until He got up again, and tottered on a few steps further. Jesus bore these great sufferings, to atone for our sins, those sins which we commit through impatience, when God sends us any little cross or suffering, and we do not bear it patiently, but murmur or scold, and sometimes people are even wicked enough to curse and swear. Have you ever made the cross the heavier for Our dear Lord by being impatient or by murmuring? Will you ever do so again?

5. *The crucifixion.* When Jesus had arrived on mount Calvary, the soldiers began by tearing off the clothes

from His sacred body, thus causing Him to suffer the most acute pain. When you cut your finger and your mother binds a piece of linen round it, the linen sticks to the wound, and if anyone were to tear it off roughly, you would scream with the pain, because the wound would be torn open again, and would hurt you more, than when you cut yourself. But with Jesus, it was not merely one wound, for, by that cruel scourging the whole of His sacred back was covered with gaping wounds, and then they put His clothes on again, and placed the heavy cross upon His shoulders, which caused the clothes to stick to the wounds, and then they pulled them all off again roughly, and all the wounds were torn open again. The soldiers then stretched Jesus upon the cross and fastened Him to it by His hands and feet. They took a great heavy hammer and drove great nails through His hands and His feet, and as they did that, the blood gushed out. How very painful it is, if you only run a thorn into yourself or cut yourself badly with a knife or with scissors: What pain must it have been then, when they drove the sharp, thick nails through Our dear Lord's hands and feet with all their might! Then they drew the heavy cross up into the air with ropes, and fastened it securely in the ground. And thus Our Blessed Saviour hung upon the cross for three long hours, and in all His frightful pain He could not even move; for if He tried to move, then the nails tore deeper into His flesh, and if He tried to turn His head, the crown of thorns struck against the cross, and the sharp thorns pressed the more cruelly into His head. Jesus bore all these frightful pains, to atone for our sins, especially our sins of disobedience; for by this "He became obedient even unto the death of the cross". How often have you not already been guilty of these sins, and thus caused Our dearest Saviour these terrible pains! So

then, when you are tempted to be disobedient or unruly again, cast your eyes upon a picture of the crucified Jesus and think: No, I will not grieve Jesus, I will be obedient, that I may be like Him.

79. Where was Jesus Christ crucified?

On Mount Calvary, near the city of Jerusalem.

Jesus was crucified on a little hill *near*, that is close by, the city of Jerusalem. The hill is called Calvary, and also Golgotha. Two thieves were crucified there at the same time as Jesus Christ.

80. Who condemned Jesus to death?

The Roman governor Pontius Pilate.

The Jews themselves would not have dared to crucify Jesus, for they were no longer the masters of their own country. The Roman Emperor was their ruler; but as he could not be in Judea and rule them himself, he appointed a man, to rule in his stead. This man was called the governor or president. The man, who ruled in Judea at that time, was named Pontius Pilate. The Jews went to him and entreated him to *condemn* Jesus *to death*, that is to pronounce Him guilty and to order Him to be crucified. Pilate saw very well, that Jesus was innocent, but the Jews threatened him, and through fear he sentenced Jesus to death on the cross. (Was that right? . . . Why not? . . . Would it be right for you to steal, because a comrade told you, that he would beat you, if you did not do so? . . .) That is, why you say in the creed: "Suffered under Pontius Pilate."

81. How did Jesus suffer?

Jesus suffered of His own free will, innocently and patiently, out of compassion and great love for us.

All these frightful sufferings, which I have been telling you of, and many more, which I could tell you of, Jesus suffered *of His own free will*. What does that mean? When you have the tooth-ache etc., do you like it? . . . Why do you bear the pain then? Because you *must*, whether you will or not. Now, was it so with Jesus? Was He *obliged*, to suffer all these pains? No, He had *free will*, to suffer or not to suffer (Quest. 44). He might have avoided all these pains, if He had wished, but He was willing to bear all these sufferings patiently, because He loved us poor creatures, and wished to save us through His sufferings. He knew, when He went up to Jerusalem, shortly before His passion, what the Jews would do to Him. He foretold it to His disciples. "Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man (that is Jesus) will be scourged" etc. He had only to stay away from Jerusalem, but He went of His own free will, to meet sufferings and death. And when the soldiers ill-treated Him, He had only to say a word, or simply to will it, and they would all have fallen down dead, and He would have been saved from suffering, but He wished to suffer. Before the soldiers crucified Him, they offered Him a bitter and stupefying drink, in order to lull the pain, but He would not drink it, because He was willing to bear the whole of the suffering. So it was of His own free will, that He suffered.

Again, Jesus suffered *innocently*. Suppose your parents had forbidden you to climb up a tree, and you did climb up it, and you fell down and sprained your ankle, and you had to lie in bed, and to suffer great pain. Would you be suffering this pain innocently? No, it would be by your own fault, and a punishment for your own disobedience. But did Jesus deserve to suffer? Had He sinned, that He should deserve such punishment? No, Jesus had never committed the smallest

sin, and had never deserved punishment, so He suffered innocently.

And Jesus suffered *patiently*. When a child is ill and has to lie in bed, he is often very impatient; he complains, he cries, and he is unwilling to submit to the pain and to the restraint; he says: I want to get up; why should I be ill, while other children are running about? Such a child has no patience, is impatient. Another child may have a great deal of pain, but he is quiet and contented; he never murmurs or complains; he thinks: Almighty God has sent me these pains, therefore I will accept them from His hand. This child is patient—has patience. So Jesus suffered patiently. Although He had more pain to bear than ever any man had borne before, yet He never complained, was not discontented, but suffered every thing quite willingly, in order to do the will of His Heavenly Father, to save us from sin and hell, and to open the gates of Heaven to us again. So we say further, that Jesus suffered *out of compassion and great love for us*.

Think, if one of your dearest friends were ill, and suffered great pain, and cried very bitterly, would you not feel very sad, and would you not cry also and willingly do something to help him, if you could, and be ready to give him your prettiest book or your best playthings, if by that means you could relieve his pain? Now why would you cry and wish so to help this child? Would you cry if the child were well and happy? No, it is because he suffers, that you suffer too, that you pity him, that you feel compassion for him: people have compassion on those who are unhappy or suffering. Again, if you did not know the child, or if you did not like him, would you pity him so much, or have such a wish to help him? No, you feel this compassion and this desire to help, because you love him. Now see,

we (that is all men) were very unhappy in sin and misery, and would have gone to the greatest of all miseries in hell. Then Our dearest Saviour took compassion on us in our misery, and because He loved us so much, He ardently desired to help us. So He suffered our punishment, which we had deserved, that God might not punish us. It was out of tender compassion and because of His great love for us, that He suffered all those frightful torments, which I have told you of.

So then, dear children, since Jesus bore so patiently so many and such great sufferings for the love of us, we also should, for the love of Jesus, patiently suffer whatever crosses God may send us. There was once a very good little girl, whose name was Mary Josephine, (she was one of those little heathen-children, whom good priests had bought and baptized and brought up Catholics; see Quest. 53) and she was very ill and suffered great pain in her chest and in her side. One day a pious lady went to visit her and said: "Poor child, how much you must suffer!" But Mary Josephine took up a crucifix, which was lying on her bed, and said: "O see, how much more my dear Saviour suffered for me. He was pierced with nails, my hands and feet have never had nails driven through them; He hung upon the cross, I am lying on a soft bed; He suffered fearfully in all His limbs, whilst I have only a little pain in my side. Since then Jesus suffered so much for me, I will willingly endure my little sufferings for His dear sake." You also, dear children, should do as this good child did. When you are ill, or in pain, have the tooth-ache etc., think: "Thou, O my dearest Jesus, hast suffered far worse for me, I will therefore bear this little suffering patiently for Thy dear sake." And if you find it hard to remain in bed, think: "Thou, O my dearest Jesus,

didst hang upon the cross for me, so I will lie in bed for the love of Thee." In that way you will be grateful children, and you will please Jesus very much.

82. How did Jesus die?

He said: "Father! into Thy hands I commend my spirit," then He bowed His head and died.

After Jesus had hung upon the cross for three hours in the greatest agony, the moment of His death at last came, and Jesus said: "Father! into Thy hands I commend my spirit." To whom did He say this? . . . "*Into Thy hands I commend, or give up my spirit,*" that Thou mayest receive it, when it goes forth from my body. *Then Jesus bowed His head* in token, that He gave up His soul out of obedience to His Heavenly Father. And He *died*, that is, His soul went forth from His sacred body. You shall hear later on, what became then of both body and soul. Jesus died on a Friday, about three o'clock in the afternoon.

When Jesus died, God showed by great miracles, that it was not an ordinary man, but the true Son of God, Who had just died; for during three whole hours it was quite dark, as if it were night, whereas it was only about the middle of the day. The Earth trembled, and it seemed, as if all the houses would be thrown down one upon another, and many of the bodies of the dead, who had been in their graves for a very long time, rose up and showed themselves to the people. Think, dear children, what a shock that must have been! Then many of the Jews and heathens, who had not believed before, knew well, that Jesus was the Son of God. A heathen centurion or officer, who was there during the crucifixion, beat his breast in token of his sorrow for having tormented Jesus, and said: "Truly, this was the Son of God."

Jesus died, suffered death, but for whom?

83. For whom did Jesus die?

For me and all mankind.

Jesus died for *all mankind*, for all men, for those, who had lived, before He came into the world; also for those, who were still living at that time, when He was hanging on the cross, even for those, who crucified Him; He died for all men, who have lived since that time, and for all those, who will live from this time to the end of the world. Jesus suffered for all and prayed to His Heavenly Father, that all might be restored to grace and thus be enabled to obtain eternal salvation. Jesus died also for each one of you, my dear children. Jesus is the Son of God and therefore knows all things; so when He hung upon the cross, He foresaw that you would come into the world, and saw also by what sins you would offend God, and the punishment you would deserve for those sins. And He had pity on you, and took your punishment upon Himself, and prayed to His Heavenly Father for each one of you, saying: Dearest Father! when this child comes into the world, grant him the grace of holy baptism; and when he commits these . . . sins, cast him not down into hell; I will now suffer all the punishment, which he will have deserved, and I will also die for him; forgive him then and grant him the grace to obtain eternal salvation. O dear children, how thankful you ought to be to Our dear Saviour for such great love!

Suppose your parents were to tell you, that when you were very little, the house you were in was on fire, and you were in your cradle, and in great danger of being burnt to death. Then a stranger came and snatched you out of the flames; but in doing so, he was so badly burnt himself, that he died in the greatest agony. Would you not be for ever grateful to that man? Now, Jesus

Christ has done still more: He saved you not from the flames of a burning house; but from the flames of everlasting fire; and by doing so, He himself suffered the most frightful pains and sacrificed His own life. He, the great and glorious Son of the all-powerful God, gave His life for you, a poor miserable, sinful child, although you could do nothing whatever for Him in return, and although He knew beforehand, that you would offend Him very much. Would it not be very ungrateful of you, if you would not even do some little thing to please your dear Saviour, such as to say your prayers devoutly, to obey your parents, or to suffer some little pain patiently.

Would it not be horrible, if instead of loving and thanking Him, you were to offend Him by committing grievous sin?

I once read an anecdote about a knight, who was passing along on his way, when he happened to see a lion struggling with a serpent, which had attacked him, and which would soon have killed him. The knight drew his sword and cut the serpent in pieces, and so saved the lion's life. The lion was so grateful to the knight, that he followed him about everywhere, and brought the other animals, which he caught, to him, and tried in every way to show his gratitude to him. Now, unless you wish to be less grateful than this poor unreasoning animal, you must love and thank Our dearest Lord and try to please Him by your piety and obedience, and follow after Him, that is, follow in His footsteps, be like Him, live innocently, suffer patiently, etc. When St. Margaret was a very little child, she once asked her elder sister, what the cross meant, and her sister told her all about how Jesus suffered and died on the cross for her. Margaret shed tears and kissing the cross said: „Dearest Jesus! now, I will be wholly Thine”;

and from that time she loved Jesus dearly, and tried to please Him, and whenever she saw a cross, she prayed and thanked Him very fervently. So you also, dear children, should think often and lovingly of the bitter sufferings of Jesus, and ask Him to grant that these sufferings may not be in vain for you.

84. In what way would the sufferings of Jesus be lost and in vain for us?

The sufferings of Jesus would be lost and in vain for us, if we died in sin and were cast into hell.

Suppose you had a little sister, who was very ill, and your father sent for the doctor, and he came every day, and your father had to pay him a great deal of money for coming, and after all your little sister were to die: then all the money, which your father had paid the doctor, would be in vain, that is, would be lost. Why did your father pay the money? He paid the money that your sister might be cured. Well, that has not been done, so the money has been paid in vain, has been lost. Well now, Jesus shed His blood and suffered so many torments, that we might be cleansed from our sins and go to Heaven. Now, when would this precious blood be shed in vain for us? It would be shed in vain for us, if we notwithstanding fall into sin or remain in sin; and so do not go to Heaven, but to hell.

I will conclude by telling you another little anecdote. Little Melanie was very often self-willed and disobedient, and by these faults caused her father a great deal of anxiety (her mother had been dead some time). One day Melanie found a pretty crucifix in a box. She asked her father what it was. Her father told her all about how much Jesus had suffered, and how obedient and patient He was, and how, while He hung upon the cross, He prayed for His tormentors, and then died in

the midst of the most terrible agonies, and He told her, how the crucifix reminds us of all this. When her father saw, how attentive and how moved she was, as she listened to him, he added gravely: Do you know, my child, who it was that caused Our dear Lord to suffer these cruel torments? Your sins also caused them, it was for your disobedience and for your wilfulness, that He had to suffer. The tears came into little Melanie's eyes, and she asked her father to give her the crucifix. Her father gave it to her, and she went into her little room, and knelt down and, weeping, she kissed the crucifix and said: "O my Jesus, I also am guilty of Thy sufferings, I also have caused Thy torments by my disobedience and wilfulness. Forgive me; I did not know, that I was grieving Thee so; I will never do it again." And she kept her word. Whenever she was tempted to be disobedient or wilful again, she looked upon the crucifix, and thought of Our dear Lord, and obeyed at once.

§ 4. The Resurrection and Ascension.

You now know, how Jesus was born into this world, how He lived, and how He died. The Catechism now goes on to tell us about His *Resurrection and Ascension*; that is about, how He arose from the dead and went up to Heaven.

85. What happened to Jesus after His death?

His body was laid in the grave, and His soul went down into Limbo, the place, where the souls of the just were detained.

You know, when a man dies, the soul goes forth from the body, and then the body is dead. A dead body is called a *corpse*. The soul goes either to Heaven, or to hell, or to purgatory; but the corpse is taken to the cemetery, and buried in the Earth, *laid in the grave*. Was it so with Jesus? His soul also went forth out

of His body, and His body was then dead. This dead body or corpse of Christ was then laid in the grave; but it was not the same sort of grave as the grave-diggers make in the ground with a pick-axe and spade; it was a hollow in a rock. It was there, that some holy men and women placed the body of Jesus, wrapped up in linen. The hollow or opening had no door, so in order to fasten it up, they rolled a very large stone against the opening.

But where was the soul of Jesus? It *went down into limbo*. What is that? Is it hell? or purgatory? No, limbo is a place, where the souls of *the just* were detained, that is those, who had lived before Jesus died, those, who had been pious, good people, or who had repented of their sins, and done penance for them, such as, for instance, Adam, Abel, Noah, Moses etc. These just souls did not go to hell, because only the wicked go there; and they did not go to purgatory, because only those who have sins to expiate, go there (Quest. 98); and they did not go to Heaven, because no one could enter there, before Jesus had redeemed the world, and had gone up to Heaven Himself. They went therefore into limbo, and were to wait there, until Jesus died. They did not suffer pain there, like those who are in purgatory or in hell; but they had not the joys of Heaven either. They therefore waited with the greatest longing, until Jesus came and set them free from limbo, and took them up to Heaven with Him. How much they must have rejoiced! Only think, Adam had been waiting thousands of years in limbo for the coming of the Saviour. How these souls must have thanked the Saviour, for having died to save them!

The dead body or corpse of Jesus was buried; but,

86. Did His body remain always in the grave?

No, on the third day Jesus came forth, body and soul, gloriously from the grave.

Jesus died and was buried on a Friday; *on the third day* He rose up out of the grave. Now what day was that? Friday, Saturday and a part of Sunday, the dead body of Jesus lay in the grave; but now the soul of Jesus came back again into His body, and so Jesus arose out of the grave, *both body and soul*. But there is still another word to be explained: He arose *gloriously*. That is to say: He was quite glorious, radiant, shining. As He hung upon the cross, His body was quite disfigured, His adorable face was pale and hollow, all covered with blood, all His limbs were covered with stains and scars and wounds, so that He scarcely looked like a man. But now, His body was beautiful and glorious, the spots and stains were gone; only in His hands and feet the marks of the nails were still to be seen, and the lance-wound in His side (a soldier had pierced Jesus in the breast, in the heart, with his lance, after He was dead), and these wounds were bright and shining, and His whole body was glorious and radiant, much more beautiful than the sun shining on a polished mirror; but Jesus did not let His disciples see all this splendour, because it would have frightened them.

Now think, how very sad the disciples of Jesus were, when their dear Lord was taken prisoner, and so cruelly treated, and then put to death! How full of grief His most holy Mother must have been, when she stood by the cross and saw Him suffer and die! Mothers grieve very much, when one of their little children is buried. If a mother (for instance your mother) was obliged to look on while her child was being killed, and then receive his dead body into her arms, what anguish it would be to her, and what bitter tears she would shed. And yet the Mother of Jesus, who loved her child far more than any other mother ever loved the dearest of her children, stood and saw her dear Son nailed to the

cross, and she remained standing at the foot of the cross, during those three hours, that He hung there in such bitter torments, and then she saw Him die. And she took the body of Jesus in her lap and in her arms, before it was buried. O, how inconceivably grievous and painful this must have been to her heart! And now think of the joy, dear children, which this holy Mother must have felt, when she saw her Son again so bright and glorious! The disciples of Jesus too, how great their joy must have been!

We also, dear children, may and should rejoice greatly over the Resurrection of Jesus. The brothers of the Patriarch Joseph were very sad, when they saw, how unjustly they had acted towards him, and when they believed him to be dead. But when they saw him, all at once, standing before them alive and well, and dressed like a great and powerful prince: how rejoiced they were, and how fervently they thanked God! Now, dear children, we were, through our sins, guilty of the bitter sufferings and of the death of Jesus, it ought therefore to grieve us very much, that we caused Our Lord such torments. On Good Friday, the day, on which we are reminded of the death of Jesus, everything is sad, and the churches are draped in black, as they are at a funeral, and many people weep bitterly on that day. And in proportion as we grieve over our Lord's sufferings and death on Good Friday, so also we rejoice in His glorious Resurrection on Easter-Day, Easter-Sunday, that being the day, on which we commemorate the Resurrection of Our Lord. Easter is a time of joy, we are reminded on that day, that even as Jesus arose gloriously from the dead, so we also shall one day arise out of the grave, and if we have lived good lives, we also shall rise gloriously, that is, our bodies will be glorified, beautiful and shining like Jesus. But I shall tell you more about that later on.

87. Did Jesus go to Heaven immediately after His Resurrection?

No, Jesus remained on Earth forty days after His Resurrection, and appeared several times to His disciples; and then He ascended visibly before them into Heaven.

Jesus did not go up to Heaven immediately after His Resurrection, but remained on Earth forty days, and during that time He *appeared several times* to His disciples, that is, He suddenly permitted them to see Him, and He talked with them. When He wished to be seen, they saw Him, and when He did not wish them to see Him, He became invisible, and they did not see Him. Several times, when they were in a room and the doors were shut, all of a sudden, they saw Him in their midst. He had not opened the door, and He had not come in through the window, and yet He was, all at once, present in the room.

Why did He appear several times to the disciples? To show them, that He was truly risen, really living again. He showed them the print of the nails in His hands and feet, that they might themselves believe in His Resurrection and publish, that is, make known the same to other people. And He told them what they were to do, when He was no longer visibly on Earth; He promised to send down the Holy Ghost upon them, and told them, that they were to go and preach to the people, that they might believe in Him, and they were also to help them to obtain Heaven by means of the sacraments.

Then, on the fortieth day after His Resurrection (it was on a Thursday), *He ascended into Heaven visibly in the sight of His disciples*. He ascended from the Mount of Olives, near where He had suffered the sweat of blood. Jesus had assembled His disciples together, and given

them once more the commission, to preach the faith to all nations and to baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Then He gave them His blessing, and lifted Himself up gently into the air, gradually becoming less and less visible, like a bird, when it rises up into the air. (But Jesus had no wings.) The disciples continued looking up after Him, until they could scarcely see Him at all, and then, all at once, a cloud came and prevented them from seeing Him any longer (just as the clouds often hide the sun from our view).

The disciples grieved very much to think, that now they would never see Jesus again on Earth; but still they rejoiced, because they knew, that their dear Saviour was now in great glory in Heaven, and also because Jesus had promised them, that they should come to Him in Heaven, and that He would go and prepare a beautiful place for them. And they must have often looked up to Heaven, with a great longing to be with Him in that beautiful paradise. May we also hope to go there one day?

88. Shall we also go to Heaven?

Yes, if we believe in Him, keep His commandments and follow His example.

So then, if we wish to go to Jesus in Heaven, what must we do? We must 1. *believe in Him*, that is, we must hold for certain, that He is the Son of God, who became man and died for us; and we must believe all that He taught us, and accept it as quite certain and true. We must 2. *keep His commandments*, that is, strictly hold to what He has commanded us. You shall soon hear more fully what Jesus has commanded you; but you already know many things, you know you must say your prayers devoutly, obey your parents, etc. We

must 3. *follow His example*, that is, do as Jesus did, live as He lived. Now, if you were told to go to N., and you did not know the way, and somebody else, who did know the way, happened to be going there too, what would you do, if you wished to make sure of getting there? Would you not follow him and go the same way as he went? See then, dear children, we all wish to get to Heaven; but we do not know the way. Jesus came down from Heaven to show us the way, He is, as it were, gone on before us; He has shown us, what we must do, in order to get to Heaven. We must imitate Him, live as He lived. Now, what was Jesus in His childhood? He was obedient, He was patient, He was humble and meek; then what must you also be? What must you be, if you wish to get to Heaven? You must be obedient and patient, and meek and humble, like Him. So then, if we believe in Jesus, keep His commandments, and follow His example, we shall go to Him in Heaven.

There was once a father, who had been obliged to leave his children and go a long journey into a foreign country. The children wished very much to go and join their father. After a time a letter came from the father, in which he said to his children: "Dear children, I am now in a most beautiful country; it is more beautiful here even in the open fields, than it is in the most lovely gardens, where you are. The most delicious fruits grow here in abundance; there are here such beautiful animals and lovely little birds, which shine like gold and silver, or like the rainbow, and they sing so beautifully. The house I live in, is much finer and handsomer than even the king's palace in the country, where you are now. Well, dear children, in a short time I shall come back to you, and whichever one amongst you has been really good and diligent, I shall take back with me, and then,

we shall live such a joyous, happy life together." Now, dont you think, the children must have been very much delighted to receive such a letter as this, and that they would take great pains to be good, so that they might be permitted to go with their father into this beautiful country! Still more beautiful things are promised to you, dear children. Our dear Lord has gone before you into Heaven, in comparison with which, the most beautiful country is far poorer, and more miserable, than a barren sand-heap is, compared with a magnificent flower-garden. And He has promised you, that He will come, and that those amongst you, who have lived good lives, will then be allowed to go with Him to Heaven, and dwell there for ever and ever in the greatest happiness. Rejoice therefore, dear children, and make a firm resolution, from this time forth to say your prayers very fervently, to be very obedient, and to avoid sin, so that you may one day go to Our dearest Lord in Heaven. And when you say the 2^d of the glorious mysteries of the Rosary, think of Jesus, who ascended into Heaven. Think also of this on the day, on which the church commemorates this holy mystery, namely on Ascension-Day.

FIFTH TRUTH.

OF GOD OUR JUDGE.

89. Will Jesus never again appear visibly on Earth?

Yes, at the end of the world Jesus will again appear visibly on Earth.

In the last instruction you heard, how Jesus went up visibly to Heaven in the sight of His apostles. When He was no longer visible, two angels appeared to the disciples and said: "This Jesus, who is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come, as you have seen Him going into Heaven."

When will this be? At the *end of the world*, that is, when the world, as it is at present, will have come to an end, will have passed away. Then the sun will no longer shine, the stars will give no more light, the mountains, the woods, in short all, which you now see, will then be destroyed. No more people will be born, no more people will die. Then, when the end of the world is come, Jesus will descend *visibly on this Earth*; all men will see Him, for He will come down from Heaven surrounded by thousands and millions of holy angels, and by all the saints who are in Heaven, and He will be brighter and more shining than the noon-day-sun.

90. Why will He come?

He will come to judge all men, both the good and the bad.

He will come to *judge*, to sit in judgment. When two persons enter into a law-suit; they go before the judge. And he judges between them, and says to the one: you are in the right, the money (for instance) belongs to you; to the other he says: you are in the wrong, you will not have anything. Or when anybody is accused of having stolen, then the judge pronounces judgment; he says: he is guilty, he is the thief, and he must go to prison (for instance) for three years; or, he is innocent, and must be set at liberty. So also will Our Lord judge, and He will judge *all men, both the good and the bad*, that is, He will tell every one, what he has deserved. He will say to the good: you have lived good lives, you have done such and such good works, you shall be rewarded, you shall go to Heaven. And He will say to the wicked: you have lived bad lives, you have committed such and such sins, you shall be punished, you shall go to everlasting punishment, to hell.

91. What do we call the judgment, that will take place at the end of the world?

We call it the *general* or universal judgment, because all men, in the whole world, will then be judged at the same time.

The word "universal" means: all without exception. There is universal joy in the school, when all the children rejoice together. Now, if I were to hear your lesson and give a pretty picture to those, who had learnt the Catechism well, and were to punish the others, would there be universal joy? No, because all the children would not rejoice together. But if I were to say to you: "my dear children, to-morrow morning I will bring each one of you a pretty book", then the pleasure would be general or universal. So the judgment at the end of the world is called general or universal, because all men together, at the same time, will be judged. All the people, who have lived from Adam's time up to the present day, and all, who will live from now to the end of the world, they will all be gathered together before the throne of Christ. All the people, who have lived in England, and all those, who have lived in America, and in Australia, and in every other country in the world: all must come together. Then each person will be told, in the presence of all people, what good or what evil he has done, and whether he is to go to Heaven or to hell. Everything, even the most secret things, that people have done, all will be known then. If, for instance, any child has been very good and pious, has prayed very much in secret, or has given alms to the poor without anybody knowing anything about it, etc., then, at the general judgment, all men will know of these good works, and the child will have honour and joy before all the angels and before all men. But if any

child has been wicked, has done shameful things even in the most secret places, or even if he has only thought of shameful things, then all the angels and all people will know of it. It will be, as if there were written on his forehead, all that he has thought, said and done. O, how utterly ashamed such a child will feel, when his parents, his brothers and sisters, his companions, before whom he appeared to be so good (his confessor, whom he deceived, because he hid these sins from him), everybody will see, that that child, whom they all took to be so good, was nevertheless so very wicked and shameful.

Dear children! Have you never done anything wicked (for instance told untruths etc.), and then, it has been found out, and you have been so dreadfully ashamed? You perhaps thought: O, if I could only go a long way off, where no one would see or know anything about me. But how ashamed you would be, if all the bad and shameful things, you have ever *thought*, were to be known, to be written out and held up before you, to be seen by all the angels and all the people! You would be so overwhelmed with shame, that you would wish to sink down under the Earth, to hide yourself, if it were possible. In order that you may never have to be thus put to shame, make a firm resolution now, that, whenever you are quite alone, or are in a very secret place, you will never think, do, or say, what you would be ashamed for your parents or any other good people to know. And if anything of this kind happens to you, or if a companion tempts you, and the thought comes into your head; "Nobody will know", then think of the judgment-day; think, all this will be known to all men, and how ashamed I shall be! "No, I will not do it." And if, when you go to confession, you should remember a certain sin, and you say to yourself, "I will not mention this sin, I should be so ashamed", then say to

yourself, "how much more ashamed I shall have to be at the last judgment!" No, I will far rather tell my confessor now: so that I may not be put to shame before all the angels and all the world".

And be good and pious, even when nobody notices you or praises you: so that at the last judgment you may have honour and reward and joy before all men and angels.

You have already heard, that at the general judgment all the people will be gathered together, and I have told you, that people will be able to read, as if it were on every one's forehead, whether he has lived a good or a bad life. But will people be able to see one another then? You know, we cannot see the soul, nor yet the bodies of those, who have been dead so long, that they have mouldered away in their graves. And yet all men will see each other there; How will that be?

92. What will happen before the general judgment?

The resurrection of the body.

The body will rise again. The bodies of those, who are dead, will rise up out of their graves, before the general or universal judgment begins.

93. What do we mean by "Resurrection of the body"?

We mean, that God will raise the bodies of the dead to life again.

So, when the judgment-day comes (when that will be, no one knows, God alone knows that) the *bodies of the dead* (whether they have been dead only a short time, or have been dead hundreds or thousands of years) *will all come to life again*, that is, they will be living bodies once more (just as a person, awaking out of sleep, knows everything again: he can see and hear again and so on). Even if they have been a long time gone to corruption—if they are fallen to dust, each separate soul will be united again to the same body, which it had in its lifetime.

All men will rise again, but not all in the same way. Those, who have been good and pious and have made a good use of their bodies in life, for instance, used their tongues for prayer, their hands to do good, to work for the love of God, to give alms to the poor, and so on, they will arise in a glorious and shining body, like unto the body which Our Lord now has in Heaven. This body will never more suffer pain or sickness and can never die again. They will not, as we are at present, be obliged to go slowly from one place to another; but as the bird soars up into the air and swiftly flies from one place to another; so, and even more swiftly, will the saints go wherever they wish. And their bodies will be so bright and shining, more beautiful to behold than the sun is when it shines on the glittering dew-drops, or in the rainbow in the vault of Heaven. O, what joy the souls of the blessed will have when they re-enter these beautiful and glorious bodies, in which they are to dwell for ever and ever! If any one were to show you a beautiful house with very pretty rooms in it, and lovely pictures etc., so beautiful, that you had never seen anything like it before, and were to tell you, that you might always live there, would you not rejoice? And the just also will rejoice, when they see the beautiful and glorious bodies, in which their souls are to dwell for all eternity.

But the bodies of the wicked, who have lived in sin, and have used their bodies to commit sin (for instance, their eyes to look on sinful things; their tongues to curse and swear, and to speak evil things), these bodies will be horrible, frightful, more horrible than anything you have ever seen, or than you can possibly imagine, and an unbearable stench will go out from them; and because the wicked have made use of their bodies to commit sin, these same bodies will add to their torments

for all eternity. O, how the souls of the wicked will tremble and recoil with horror, when they see their horrible bodies and are compelled to be re-united to them! What would you feel, if any one were to show you a dark and horrible cave, where there were snakes and other reptiles, and were to say to you: „There you must live.” Would you not be horrified and say, you would rather die than be doomed to live there? Far more horrified will the souls of the wicked be, when they see their hateful bodies, and they would then gladly die; but they can never die again, they must live in their horrible bodies for ever and ever, without any end!

With what kind of body then, dear children, do you wish to arise? . . . What must you never do then? . . . And what must you do? You must never use your body—your eyes, ears, hands, tongue etc., to commit sin, and you must be pure and good, and never say anything, or do anything, never desire anything, of which you ought to be ashamed: so that you may not have to enter one day into a hateful and horrible body, there to endure shame and torment for all eternity.

94. What will God do after the general judgment?

He will take the good up to Heaven with Him, and He will cast the wicked down into hell.

When all the dead have risen from their graves, then all men will be gathered together in one place. You have heard, how Jesus will then come in all His glory, and will make known to every one all the good and all the evil, he has done. He will place the good on His right hand, and the wicked on His left. Then He will say to the good: “Come, ye blessed of my father, possess ye the kingdom of Heaven, prepared for you from all eternity.” But to the wicked He will say:

“Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” And then He will *take the good up to Heaven with Him*. Then all those who have lived good lives, will rise up gladly and joyfully into the air with Jesus, and ascend into that glorious Heaven, which I have already told you about. Only think, if you had been a long time away from your father and mother, and your brothers and sisters, and had been living with strangers, and had had a great deal to suffer: hunger, cold, ill-usage and many other hardships, and then, you were to come back and find your parents, and your brothers and sisters in a beautiful house, more beautiful than any you had ever seen, and with a lovely garden, full of flowers and fruits, and your parents were to take you joyfully by the hand, and show you all these things, and say: “Now you shall live here happily with us, and never go away from us any more, and you shall have whatever you wish for, for ever.” O, how you would rejoice! Still more joyful will the blessed be, when they go up to Heaven with Jesus, and with what thankfulness will they not praise and bless God and say: O, praise and thanks be to God, that I kept myself from sin when I was on earth, that I did not commit such and such particular sins, to which I was tempted; that I prayed earnestly, that I was obedient, both to God and to my parents and superiors, that I was patient! Now I am happy and blessed for ever and ever.

And the wicked? O children, how great will be their anguish when they see the blessed, probably their own parents, brothers, sisters, companions, going up to the bright and glorious Heaven, and they think, “I shall never again see my dear father, who so often warned me, nor my good mother, who loved me so much; they are going up to Heaven, and I, where am I going!”

And whilst they are looking up after the blessed, and weeping and wailing, the earth will open, and they will be hurled down into the awful abyss of hell. They will be *cast down into hell*, that is, far, far away from Our dear Saviour, far from Heaven, and from God, for ever and ever.

95. What is hell?

Hell is the place of everlasting, unspeakable misery and torment.

Hell is *the place of unspeakable misery and torment*, that means, those who go there will be fearfully tormented, and it will be by fire that they will be tormented, by an unquenchable fire—a fire, that never goes out, but burns day and night, always with the same fierceness. And in hell there will be wailing and gnashing of teeth, that is, those who are in hell, will howl like wild beasts do when they are in great pain, and they will gnash their teeth together because of the frightful unbearable pain.—They will suffer such terrible pains, that they will no longer be able to cry out, but only to howl like wild beasts.

You have already heard, dear children, that the blessed in Heaven suffer no pain, and enjoy every happiness (Quest. 2). Now, it is just the reverse with the damned in hell; for they have *no pleasures and endure every kind of suffering*. The damned have *no pleasures*. However unhappy a person may be here on Earth, he has almost always something which gives him pleasure. His parents or his relations console him, or he has hope that things may soon get better, or he thinks, “when I die, I shall be at rest”; then he can pray, and he can hope to go to Heaven to Our dearest Lord. The damned have no such joys, no consolation, no hope; they know things can never be better; they know God hates them, and

that they have no longer any hope of ever getting to Heaven. The damned *endure every kind of suffering*; their sufferings are so great, that we cannot form any idea of them. Have you ever burnt yourself with the candle or the fire? It hurt you very much, did it not? . . . Would you hold your hand or even your finger in the flame for a quarter of an hour for all the money in the world? You could not possibly do it, you could not hold out against the pain. Now see, the damned will not merely have their finger, but their soul (and, after the resurrection, their body) tormented in a fire, which is much more painful than the fire which we have. (Reference might here be made to the rich man 'Dives' and his pains in hell.) And they have also other very dreadful torments to bear. When a child, who has always been good before, steals anything, or commits any shameful act, he has no peace; his conscience torments him, and seems to say: "You have committed a sin; you are a thief" etc. But the remorse of conscience endured by the lost souls is inconceivably greater. They know, how happy and blessed the souls of the good are in Heaven, and they say to themselves: "My father, my brother, my sister, my companions are now in unspeakable bliss in Heaven, and I must suffer such fearful torments. O, if I had only taken a little trouble, if I had only avoided this sin of theft, or of impurity etc., then I too might be in Heaven; but now, I am condemned to suffer these frightful torments for ever and ever." Imagine, dear children, that a father had promised his children, if they were obedient and industrious, he would give them some great pleasure, and they were all good but one, and that one was very wicked. Then the father takes the good children into the garden and gives them some most delicious fruit to eat, and beautiful things to play with, and the children are happy and

joyful; but the wicked child is severely punished and shut up in a dark room. Then, whilst he is hungry and wretched, he hears his brothers and sisters singing joyfully, and he thinks to himself, "If I had been obedient, I might now be happy and joyful also, with my brothers and sisters", and he begins to weep bitterly. O, infinitely greater will be the pain of the damned, when they see how happy the blessed are, and they think: I too might have been just as happy, but now, I am damned by my own fault.

And the worst is, that these torments of the damned will never have an end, they will last for ever. When any one is suffering even the most terrible pain, he can still, from time to time, sleep a little and have a little rest, and he can think, when death comes, then the pain will be over. Have you ever had a very bad tooth-ache? If any one had told you that you would have to bear that pain for a whole year, without ever having a minute's rest, you would have thought: "I cannot possibly endure it, I would rather die." But the damned have much greater pain than that, not merely for a year, nor for a hundred years, nor yet for a thousand years; but for ever and ever! O children! that is a fearful thought. Think of a great ocean, which is so many thousands of miles long, that, when people cross over it, they are a great many days and nights without seeing anything else but sky and water, which is so deep, that, if our church-towers could be put one on the top of the other several hundreds of times, they would not reach the bottom. What countless drops of water there must be in a sea such as this! Even in a tumbler of water there is such a vast number of drops, that you would scarcely be able to count them; how many must there be then in a large tub of water, how many in a lake, how many in the sea! Now think, if any one could

tell the damned in hell, God had commanded that: every hundred years a little bird should come and drink one drop of water out of the sea; and that after another hundred years he should come again and drink another drop; and so on every hundred years; and that, when the whole of the sea was thus drunk up, they should be set free out of hell. What an immense number of years that would take, so many, that you could not form any idea of the number, much less count them! And yet, the damned would be overjoyed, if God had promised them this, because they could then hope; they would know, that one day they would be set free out of hell. But they have no such hope; Judas has now been in hell more than 1800 years. What a frightful long time! The very oldest man living is scarcely a hundred years old. And yet, when Judas has suffered in hell for another 1800, and 18 000 years, and 18 millions of years, still his punishment will be no nearer its end. He must suffer for ever. That is one of the greatest torments of the damned; they know, they can never be free again. They must suffer for ever, without end.

Dear children, think, if you too were to go to hell, would not that be an awful misfortune! And yet, if you commit one single mortal sin, and die without God's forgiveness, you will go to hell. What will you do then? O, never commit sin! rather suffer anything, suffer sickness, or, like the holy martyrs, suffer death, rather than commit a mortal sin. For then, if you are sick and die, you will go to Heaven, and sickness and death will harm you no longer. How little did Lazarus care after he got to Heaven, for the sickness and poverty which he had endured on Earth! And what pleasure did the rich man have in the remembrance of his former good eating and drinking, and his fine clothes, after he went into hell! Yet, through one single mortal sin you

might go to hell, and then you would be miserable for ever.

When St. Francis Regis was five years old, he once heard his pious mother talking with a neighbour about the torments which the damned must suffer for all eternity. This conversation made a powerful impression on the mind of the little Francis, and he had, from that time, a great fear of hell, and of sin, which leads us to hell; often, when he was alone, he would cry out; "O no! no sin, O no! not hell!" You also should often think the same, especially when you are tempted to commit a sin (particularly a grievous sin); then say: O my God, I would rather die than commit this sin; and pray to God often thus: Dear Lord, let me rather die now, than live to commit a mortal sin and go to eternal punishment in hell.

The general judgment will take place at the end of the world. Is that the only judgment, that there is? Are the people, who are already dead, not yet judged? Certainly, for there are already so many souls in Heaven, so many in hell, and so many in purgatory (who will also go to Heaven). Since then these are already judged, there must be another judgment before the universal or general judgment at the end of the world. This is explained in the following question of the Catechism.

96. Is there another judgment, besides the general judgment?

Yes, there is the *particular* judgment, in which every man is judged immediately after his death.

At the general judgment all men will be judged together at the end of the world. At the *particular* judgment every one will be judged, not for the first time at the end of the world, but *immediately after his death*. But does every one die at the same time? No, one dies

to-day, another to-morrow. So then, if each one is judged directly after his death, they are not all judged together; but each one separately. Those, who are dead, are already judged, and those, who will die to-day, will be judged to-day.

Imagine, my child, if you were to die to-day; at the moment, when your soul went out from your body, you would appear before God, and God would put before you, all that you had done, both good and evil, all, everything, whatever you had thought, said, or done, alone or with other children. Your guardian-angel himself would have to accuse you of having so often refused to listen to him, refused to pray etc. The guardian-angels of other children would accuse you if you had led other children into sin, had set them bad example, had talked wicked things with them. O my child! if you were to die to-day, what would God place before you at the judgment? Do you know, when you will die? O, live then always in such a manner, that God may not have your bad actions to place before you, that you may be always ready to be judged by Him.

97. Where does the soul go after the particular judgment?

The soul goes either to Heaven, or to hell, or to purgatory.

When a man dies, God holds up before him, what good or what evil he has done, and then God pronounces sentence, that is, He says: "Thou hast deserved reward"; or, "Thou hast deserved punishment". Those, who have no stain of sin upon them, for instance, children, who die after baptism, before they are able to commit sin, or grown people, who have sinned, but whose sins have been forgiven by God, and who have done penance for their sins, go straight *to Heaven*, to everlasting happiness. And those, who die guilty of mortal sin, go straight *to*

hell, to everlasting pain. But there are also others, who are not guilty of mortal sin, but who are however not quite pure from sin, or who have not done penance for their sins: where do they go? They do not go to hell, because only the very wicked go there, who die in mortal sin, and they cannot go to Heaven, because no one can go to Heaven, who is not perfectly pure: where do they go then? To a place, where they will be cleansed from their sins. This place is called purgatory, and it is a place of suffering by fire, because those who are there, are tormented and punished by fire, until they are cleansed from their sins, and have done penance for them. When they are quite pure, they come out of purgatory, and are taken up into Heaven.

98. What souls go to purgatory?

The souls of the just, that are not yet quite pure, or that have not done sufficient penance for their sins.

So then the souls of the *just* go into purgatory, i. e. those, who have lived good lives according to God's commandments, and have died in the grace of God, that is, without the stain of mortal sin upon them. But those, who are *quite pure*, they go to Heaven. That is why the Catechism says: *those, who are not yet quite pure*. For instance, it might happen, that your dress was free from great stains, and yet, if you looked carefully at it, you might see some small spots upon it; it would then be clean, but not quite clean. So also a man may be free from mortal sin upon his soul, and yet there may be some smaller sins upon him. For example, a child may be pious and good, never say bad words, never say or do anything vile and abominable, but he may now and then be rather disobedient, not obey as punctually as he ought, and sometimes he may be careless and not say his prayers devoutly. Such a child is just,

belongs to the just, but is not yet purified from all sin, and if he dies thus, he goes to purgatory.

But there are also others who go to purgatory. They are those who have sinned, have even committed great sins, mortal sins, but before their death they confessed them, and God forgave them (at least their grievous sins). These souls do not go to hell. But God makes them do penance for their sins, that is, suffer the temporal punishment due to them. Just as a father might forgive a child, be kind to him again, love him again; but yet make the child suffer some punishment for his fault, for instance, stay at home instead of going out to play etc. Many people suffer these punishments while they are in this life, for instance, they are poor, or sick, and have pain, and bear these sufferings very patiently, and think: "I have deserved this by my sins." If they suffer all the punishment which their sins have deserved, while they are still in this world, then they do not need to go to purgatory, they have nothing more to suffer, they have *no more penance to do for their sins*. But a great many people die before they have done sufficient penance, *they have still to do penance for their sins*; and so they have to suffer in purgatory until they have borne all the punishment they have deserved by their sins. Those, who suffer thus in purgatory, are called the *poor*, holy souls. They are souls, whose bodies lie in the grave, and they are *poor*. Poor people are badly off and cannot help themselves, but good people help them. The poor (or holy) souls are badly off, because they have much to suffer, and cannot help themselves; but good people can help them, that is, they can pray for them, that they may be released from purgatory the sooner.

From what I have now told you about purgatory, dear children, I wish you to remember in particular two points: 1. Live so, that you may not have to go to purga-

tory (or at least not for long). For what sins do people go to purgatory? For venial sins. Many children think nothing of little sins, such as careless prayers, little lies, little acts of disobedience, and so on, and they say: "I shall not go to hell for that." Such children are very foolish; although such faults do not send people to hell, still they have to go to purgatory for them, and to suffer very terrible pain. If a man were to steal something and say: "that is nothing, I shall not be hanged for that, I shall only get a couple of month's imprisonment"; would that be sensible? but still more foolish would that child be, who made light of little sins; because in purgatory the poor souls suffer much more than people who are put in prison here. Therefore, dear children, be on your guard against such little faults. How many children are now in purgatory bitterly repenting and thinking: "O, if I had only said my prayers more devoutly, if I had only been more obedient, not told untruths, and so on, I should not have to suffer so much now, and should be with Our dearest Lord in Heaven"—but it is too late. So be wiser and take more care now, that you may not have to suffer later. And when you are ill or in pain, be patient and think, "I will suffer these pains as a punishment for my sins, that I may not have to suffer so much in purgatory."

2. Pray well for the poor (holy) souls. They are so badly off; they have to suffer such torments. If you were to see a poor half-frozen and half-starved man, who was weeping bitterly from pain and misery, would you not have compassion on him and willingly help him? The poor souls suffer much worse (perhaps your own dead grand-parents, parents, brothers, sisters, relations etc.), and you could so easily help them. If you pray diligently for them, you may, by your prayers, help some poor souls to get out of purgatory the sooner, and then

when they are with God, they will pray that you may live good lives, and, that if one day you go to purgatory, your time there may be shortened. And when you go to Heaven these souls will come forward to meet you, and will thank you, that, through your prayers they entered Heaven the sooner. How beautiful that would be! Pray every day, when the Angelus-bell rings (at all events in the evening), and after the Angelus, say the "Our Father" devoutly together with the verse: "May the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace!" And when there is a funeral, or when you are in a cemetery, pray earnestly for the holy souls, especially for your dead parents, relatives, benefactors etc. (All souls-day).

You know now what purgatory is, and who go there. Will there always be a purgatory, the same as there will always be a Heaven and a hell?

99. Will there still be a purgatory after the general judgment?

No, after the general judgment there will be only Heaven and hell.

After the general judgment, at the end of the world, there will be *only* Heaven and hell left. Those who were good, but still had some sins to expiate, will have completed their penance, and will then be quite pure, and there will be only the very good, who are with God in Heaven, and the very wicked, who are with the devil in hell.

OF THE APOSTLES' CREED.

100. Where are the five principal truths, and others which we must know and believe, contained?

In the twelve articles of the apostles' creed?

You have already learnt (Quest. 5), that there are five principal truths, which every Christian must believe;

do you remember which they are? I have explained the five truths to you one by one. Now there is a prayer, in which these five truths and some others are contained. It is called the *apostles' creed*. It is called *creed* or belief, because by this prayer we express or make known what we believe (Quest. 26); and it is called the *apostles' creed*, because it was composed by the apostles (the twelve first disciples or scholars of Jesus). The holy apostles were the first, who expressed their belief in these words, and taught other Christians this prayer, so that all might easily know the principal truths, which a Christian must believe. This belief is composed of twelve articles, that is, points or parts. See, this finger is composed of three joints or parts, which belong to one another, and together make up the finger; so the apostles' creed is composed of twelve parts, which together make up the creed.

101. How do you say the apostles' creed?

1. I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth;
2. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord;
3. Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary;
4. Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried;
5. He descended into hell; the third day, He rose again from the dead;
6. He ascended into Heaven; sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty;
7. From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.
8. I believe in the Holy Ghost;

9. The holy Catholic Church; the communion of saints;

10. The forgiveness of sins;

11. The resurrection of the body;

12. And life everlasting. Amen.

102. Who created you?

God the Father created me.

103. Who redeemed you?

God the Son redeemed me.

104. Who sanctified you?

God the Holy Ghost sanctified me.

In the apostles' creed, each of the divine persons is mentioned one after the other, and we are told, what each divine person has done for us. That *God the Father created us*, that *God the Son redeemed us*, and that *God the Holy Ghost sanctified us*, that is made us holy. I have already told you a great deal about, how the Father created us, and how the Son redeemed us; but I have not yet told you anything about, how the Holy Ghost sanctified us, so I will now proceed to explain that to you.

105. Who is the Holy Ghost?

The Holy Ghost is the third person of the Blessed Trinity, and He is truly God like the Father and the Son.

(See the explanation Quest. 19—25.)

106. Why is the Holy Ghost represented in the form of a dove?

Because He appeared in the form of a dove, when Christ was being baptized.

Represented means the same as painted in a picture, just as anybody might paint a man, so that the picture

looked like the man. So the Holy Ghost is represented in *the form of a dove*, that is, the Holy Ghost is painted in pictures, so that He looks like a dove. (Examples from some of the pictures and statues in the Church.) Can any one make a real picture of the Holy Ghost? Can any one make a picture of the soul? No, because it is invisible. Well, the Holy Ghost is God, He is a spirit, and therefore invisible. He cannot be painted really, as He is, for the Holy Ghost is not a dove, He is, as I have said, a spirit, He is God. Remember, that the angels can be painted, although they are spirits, and consequently invisible. They are represented, as they have been seen, as they have appeared to people, for then they took a body. So also the Holy Ghost has appeared, has shown Himself in the form of a dove. You have heard of St. John the Baptist; God sent him to announce to men the coming of the Saviour. St. John baptized the people (but not with baptism, as we Christians have it); he is therefore called the Baptist. Jesus also came to him and allowed Himself to be baptized, and when He was baptized, the Heavens opened, and a voice, the voice of the Heavenly Father, cried: "This (Jesus) is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased," and the Holy Ghost came down visibly in the form of a dove over the head of Jesus.

Why did the Holy Ghost come down in the form of a dove? The dove is a very pure little creature, it never goes into the dirt, like the hens and the geese, and always keeps its wings, its plumage, feathers, clean. Now, the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of purity and holiness; He is quite pure from all evil, and is unspeakably holy and beautiful. And He cleanses men from sin and makes them holy, as you will hear. So then the Holy Ghost took the form of a dove on account of its purity; and we may also add, on account of its being such a peaceful,

gentle little creature, for the Holy Ghost is the spirit of gentleness, of love, and of peace, and He makes men become gentle and good and peaceable, one towards another.

The Holy Ghost is also represented in another way, namely, in *the form of fiery tongues*, that is, He looks like flames of fire, which have the shape of tongues. Why is the Holy Ghost represented like that?

107. Why is He also represented in the form of fiery tongues?

Because on the feast of Pentecost He came down upon the apostles in the form of fiery tongues.

(Relate the Bible story.) Why did the Holy Ghost come down upon the apostles *in the form of fiery tongues* (that is, so that over each apostle a flame was visible of the size and form of a tongue)? What do you do with your *tongue*? Speak, talk. Well, the apostles were now to go into every part of the world, to all nations, and to speak to them of Jesus, to preach the faith to them. But they would not have been able to do that of themselves. Therefore the Holy Ghost came and helped them. And how did He help them to do it? As the apostles were to preach to foreign nations, it was necessary for them to know the different languages of the people (for every nation has its own peculiar language, and if you were to cross over the seas, and go into other countries, you would not be able to talk to the people there; they would not understand your language, and you would not understand theirs). The apostles could not learn these languages from books, for they had no books of the kind, and besides they were too old. Therefore the Holy Ghost miraculously helped them, so that, all at once, they were able to

speaking in languages, that, in their whole lives, they had never before understood, and probably never even heard.

But the Holy Ghost helped the apostles in another way as well, in a way like that, in which *fire* helps us; and that is why He appeared under the form of fire. Now how, or in what way, does fire help us? If you were to go into a room at night to look for something—to fetch something—and it was quite dark, would you be able to find it? . . . Why not? . . . What must you have? A light, consequently fire. Fire lights us, makes things clear, makes us able to see what we require etc. Now, as fire enables us to see with the eyes of the body, so the Holy Ghost enabled the apostles to see with their souls, made them know, what they had to believe. They had already heard a great deal from Jesus; but there was a great deal they did not understand, as a little baby might hear what I am saying about God, but would not understand it. But when the Holy Ghost had enlightened them, they saw everything quite clearly, and were able to explain everything plainly to others.

What further use is fire to us? Why do people make a fire in the grate in the winter? That the room may be warm. Therefore fire gives warmth also. When your hands and feet are numbed with the cold, they are as if they were dead. You can scarcely move them; you cannot run; you cannot work etc. But when you are warm again, every thing goes on swiftly again¹. And if the sun did not warm the Earth, nothing could live and grow and thrive, no flowers nor fruits. The warmth makes the Earth fruitful. So, in the same way, the Holy Ghost gave the apostles the necessary strength and zeal

¹ That is, why people say of anyone, who has no zeal: he is cold, and of anyone, who has great zeal, who works swiftly and zealously: he is all on fire.

to preach the faith to the people, without allowing themselves to be frightened, even when they were ill-used and threatened with death. And the Holy Ghost gave them His blessing, so that their preaching was fruitful, that is, the people listened to them willingly, and believed in Jesus, and followed His doctrine.

As the Holy Ghost helped the apostles, dear children, so also does He help us, that we may believe in God, love Him, serve Him, and go to Him in Heaven. He also enlightens us, he makes light in our souls, that we may see, for instance—that we must believe this—that we must not do that—that such is the will of God etc. He helps you, that you may rightly understand the religious instruction; that is why we always pray before the religious instruction, and why both the priest and the people also, pray to the Holy Ghost before a sermon. And when, at any time, you may be about to do anything wrong, steal, for instance, it is He, who makes you feel within yourself: “That is a sin; I must not do that.” He warns you inwardly to pray, to be obedient, and so on. He gives you strength and zeal, that you may avoid evil and do good. He makes you hate sin and rejoice in good. That, by which the Holy Ghost inwardly enlightens, warns, and strengthens you, is called grace. Without this grace of the Holy Spirit, you could not do any good action, you could not go to Heaven. And the Holy Ghost gives you a great many such graces every day. But I must tell you still more about one particular grace, which the Holy Ghost sends us.

108. How does the Holy Ghost sanctify us?

By sanctifying grace, which He imparts to us by means of the holy sacraments.

If we wish to go to Heaven, we must be *holy*. (Adam and Eve were holy, as you have already learnt, because

they were created for Heaven (Quest. 47). That is, we must be free from sin and pleasing to God. Are we holy when we come into the world? No, we must first be made holy. Who can sanctify us or make us holy? God alone can do that. It is God the Holy Ghost, who *sanctifies* us or makes us holy, *through sanctifying grace, which He imparts to us by means of the holy sacraments*, that is, the Holy Ghost makes us holy by giving us His sanctifying grace (this is called sanctifying, because it sanctifies us or makes us holy). And this sanctifying grace, the Holy Ghost imparts or gives to us, when we receive the holy sacraments, for example, baptism (you will hear more of the holy sacraments later on).

When you came into the world, dear children, you were not holy; your soul was not pure and beautiful, but unclean and hateful. Original sin was there. Therefore God had no pleasure in you, and if you had died thus, you would not have gone to Heaven. But God took care of you, and very soon after you came into the world, you were carried into the Church, and there received one of the sacraments, i. e. baptism; and through baptism the Holy Ghost bestowed upon you sanctifying grace. Now, this sanctifying grace quite changed your soul in a moment of time. It purified your soul from original sin, so that no stain of sin remained on it. It made your soul beautiful, so beautiful, that your guardian-angel, ah! even God Himself took pleasure in it. God made you His own child, and loved you far more, than the fondest of fathers could possibly love his only child. And if you had died directly after baptism, you would have gone immediately to Our Blessed Lord in His beautiful Heaven. And this sanctifying grace, which made your soul so pure, remains in you, as long as you do not commit a mortal sin. If, up to this time, you have never committed a mortal sin, you are still a pure and

beautiful and well-beloved child of God, whom God loves with an unspeakable love, and you may safely hope to go to Heaven. But if anyone commits a mortal sin, he loses sanctifying grace, and becomes sinful again, and God no longer loves him, and he cannot go to Heaven. But if he receives the sacrament of penance, makes a good confession, then sanctifying grace is restored to him again.

Dear children! What an unspeakably precious gift this sanctifying grace is then! What would a poor sick man, who was afflicted with leprosy give, if he could be cleansed from this terrible disease and made well again! Through sanctifying grace we are cleansed from a far worse leprosy than the leprosy of the body, and our souls are cured. What would the poor creature, the leper, not give to be healed, supposing he were rich, powerful, or heir to a throne? Through sanctifying grace we are rich in Heavenly treasures, which are worth more than all the riches and wealth of this world; we are children of the Almighty and Glorious God, who is infinitely greater and more powerful than all the princes and kings in the whole world. What would a poor unfortunate man give, who was shut up in prison awaiting execution, if he could be free again, and could hope to go back again to his home, to his parents, and friends? Through sanctifying grace we are freed from the bonds of sin, freed from hell, to which we were otherwise going, and have the sure hope of going to our Heavenly home, to our dear Heavenly Father, to all the blessed angels and saints. Yes, dear children, sanctifying grace is worth more than all the riches in the world, it makes our soul rich for God, rich for all eternity.

How thankful you ought to be then to the Holy Ghost, who has given you this most precious gift! And what care you ought to take not to lose this gift, this

sanctifying grace! If you were to receive a present of a gold-piece worth many shillings, would you throw it away carelessly or play with it, for instance, near the river, where you might easily lose it? Now, this sanctifying grace is worth infinitely more, will you then carelessly commit sin, by which you may lose it, or go with bad companions, where you may easily be led into sin?

There is one day in the year, when we ought to think of the Holy Ghost more especially, and thank Him for His grace. It is that day, on which we commemorate the coming down visibly of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles. What is that Feast called? Pentecost or Whitsunday. And there is a prayer, which we say, while we meditate on this mystery. Who knows what it is? . . . The third Glorious Mystery of the Rosary: "The coming down of the Holy Ghost." So when you say this Mystery, you should think of the Holy Ghost, and thank Him for His grace, and resolve never to lose it by committing grievous sin.

In the sacraments, we receive sanctifying grace, but when do we receive these sacraments, or as the Catechism asks:

109. Who administers to us the holy Sacraments?

The priests of the Catholic Church.

Who baptized you? Who is it that always baptizes little children? To whom do the people go, when they wish to make their confession, namely, to receive the sacrament of penance? . . . Yes, to the *priests* or spiritual fathers, who administer the sacraments. But the Catechism says: the priests of the *Catholic Church*. There are other ministers or clergymen, who do not belong to the Catholic Church, are not appointed by the Church; we do not receive the sacraments from them; but only from the priests, who are appointed by the Catholic Church.

110. What do you understand by the words "Catholic Church"?

I understand by that, all the Christians in the world who believe in the Catholic faith, and are united under one and the same head, our Holy Father, the Pope.

Catholic Church means just the same as *Universal Church*. [The Church is called universal, because it has always existed, from the time when Jesus Christ was on Earth up to the present, and is spread in every place all over the whole world (there have always been Catholic Christians since the time of Jesus Christ, and there are still Catholic Christians in every country and in all parts of the world), and because the Church is universal or common to all (compare Quest. 91); all Catholic Christians belong to it, and indeed, it is God's will, that all men without exception should belong to it.]

But what is the Church then? Perhaps you think it is the large stone-building with the clock-tower, where divine service is held. That is not what is meant here. That building is only called a church, because people who belong to the Catholic Church meet together there for divine service. But what is meant then? *All the Christians in the world*. All are called Christians, who are baptized, and believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Now, do all these belong to the Catholic Church? No, there are people, who are baptized and believe in Jesus Christ, but in other points they do not hold the true Catholic belief. These people do not belong to the Catholic Church. They are Christians, but not Catholic Christians. To the Catholic Church therefore belong all the Christians in the world, *who believe in the Catholic faith*, who believe everything, which a Catholic Christian must believe, all that the Catholic Church commands to be believed.

But it is said further '*and are united under one and the same head*'. You and your brothers and sisters have the same surname, you have only one father, and you all obey the same father; so you belong to one another; live in one house, *are united* under one father, that is, form one family. So also all Catholic Christians are united together; they have the same faith, and obey one and the same father, who rules over them all. This father all Catholic Christians call the Pope (which means father) or *Holy Father*. He is *the one head* of the Catholic Church. *Head* means, the first, the highest, the chief, the one, to whom all the others submit, whom all obey (as the head is the chief, the principal or most important part of the body). The father is also the head of the family. Why? . . . The Pope is called the *Universal* head, because not only a few of the Catholic Christians must obey him, but all, everyone, without exception, must obey him.

Now see, dear children, all Christians, who hold the Catholic faith and obey the Holy Father, all these together are called the Catholic Church. In the same way, people might say, the whole school laughed; and they would mean by that, not the school-room, but all the children who go to the school. So then what do people mean, when they say: the Catholic Church? . . . So you also belong to the Catholic Church; we all do, and so do all the Catholic Christians in other places, in foreign countries. In the whole world there are many millions of Catholic Christians, who all belong one to another, are, as it were, brothers and sisters, make one family. And who is the father of them all? . . . Who knows where the Pope lives? . . .

Who was the first Pope? . . . Who made St. Peter Pope? Jesus Himself. Jesus said to him: "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep", that is, as the shepherd rules

over the lambs and the sheep, so shalt thou reign over all who belong to my Church. And as all the lambs and the sheep obey the shepherd, so must all Catholics obey thee, if they wish to go to Heaven.

But Peter died. Was there no one left to rule over the Catholic Church then? Yes, Our Lord provided for that. St. Peter was the Bishop of Rome, and whoever is made Bishop of Rome after him, is the Pope or Holy Father; and when one dies, there is always another who succeeds him. All these are the successors of St. Peter; that is they are after him, each one in succession, Bishop of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church.

Our present Holy Father is called Leo the Thirteenth (there have been already twelve Popes who have been called Leo before him). He also is the successor of St. Peter, he has the same office, the same power, as St. Peter had. When he teaches us any doctrine, or commands us to do anything which belongs to the Catholic belief, or to the salvation of our souls, such as the services of the Church, prayers, fasting etc. (in worldly things, for instance, the payment of taxes, the building of houses etc., the Pope does not govern us, but our King or Queen), it is the same as if St. Peter himself taught us, or commanded us, and we must believe and obey precisely in the same way. He is the spiritual Father of us all, and he loves us all as his children, and we obtain through him many blessings from Almighty God. So you must all love the Holy Father very much, and pray fervently for him, especially at the present time. Wicked people have taken his land away from him (what he ought to have to live on), and have thus reduced his income very much. Good children are sure to help their father when he is in trouble. Therefore good Catholic children come to the help of their spiritual Father, the Pope, by praying for him and giving every

month a trifle of money, so that the Holy Father and the people whom he is obliged to have with him, may not suffer from want. Later on, when you have money of your own, you will no doubt gladly give a trifle to the Holy Father, and I am sure you will pray for him.

The Holy Father, the Pope, must therefore govern the whole Church, he is the leader, the guide, and all other Catholic Christians must follow him, obey him. The Catechism now asks:

111. Are there any other rulers of the Church, besides the Pope?

There are bishops also who govern their respective dioceses, and priests who are the assistants of the bishops, and subject to them.

This question means: Are there others in the Catholic Church, besides the Pope, who have to rule and command, and whom Catholics are bound to obey, in spiritual things?

The Pope rules over all Catholics in the whole world; but the world is large, very large, and there are many millions of Catholics. Can the Pope himself tell every body what must be believed, and what must be done, can he look after every body? No, that is impossible. Therefore Our dear Lord ordered that, besides the Pope, there should be other rulers who should help the Pope to govern the Church. These rulers are the bishops. Every bishop rules over a district where perhaps a great many thousands of Catholics live. A district such as this is called a bishopric. Now, there are in the Catholic Church hundreds of bishops, and each one of them governs the Catholics in his bishopric, in the same way as the Pope governs all the Catholics in the whole world. These bishops must, at the same time, themselves obey the Pope.

In the same way as there were other apostles, besides St. Peter, who ruled over the Catholics, but all were under St. Peter (Quest. 110), so the bishops are the successors of the other apostles. Before the holy apostles died they consecrated other pious good men bishops, and gave them the authority which they themselves had received from Our Blessed Lord. And these bishops again consecrated others, and so on, down to the present time. His Eminence, our Right Reverend Archbishop, was consecrated by another bishop who was himself consecrated by a bishop, and so on; and if we were to go back far enough we should come at last to one of the apostles. So then, from whom did His Eminence, our Archbishop, obtain his power? . . .

You have heard that in a bishopric there are generally a great many thousands of Catholics. Now, can one bishop attend to all these people, preach to them, say mass for them all, hear their confessions, and so on? No, so the bishop sends to each place, or parish, priests whom he has ordained, and commissions them to preach in these places, to baptize etc., and to rule over the people in spiritual things. A priest such as this is called *the parish-priest*, and the place, the district (very often there are many places) where he has spiritual power, is called a parish. If the parish is so large that the parish-priest cannot take care of all his people, the bishop sends him *other priests* whose duty it is to help him to preach, to give instruction, to hear confessions, to visit the sick, and so on, and these are called assistant priests, or curates. So then, whom must the Catholics of a parish obey? . . . The ordinary Catholics, and the priest also, whom must they obey? . . . And the people, the priests, and the bishops, whom must they obey? . . .

Who ordained that there should be a Pope, and bishops, and priests in the Church, and that they should

have authority over Catholics? Jesus Christ. So then, when you obey (in spiritual things) the Pope, the bishop, the priest, whom do you really obey? . . . And he who is disobedient to the Pope, the bishop, or the priest, to whom is he really disobedient? . . . Therefore Our Blessed Lord said to His disciples (and that applies equally to their successors, the Pope, the bishops, and the priests): "He who heareth you, heareth me; he who despiseth you, despiseth me", that means, when the Pope, the bishops, or the priests command or order anything (in spiritual things), then Catholics must obey, precisely the same as if Jesus Christ Himself commanded it. And Jesus will be just as pleased with them, and will reward them just as much as if they had been obedient to Him. And he who despises or ridicules the Pope, the bishops, or the priests, does just the same as if he were to despise and ridicule Jesus Himself, and he will be punished just the same. (Just as if a father and mother go out, and they say to the servant 'take care of the children, and tell them what they are to do', and one of the children obeys the servant very properly; whom does the child really obey? . . . Who was it said that he must obey the servant? . . . Another child is disobedient and obstinate, now, to whom is he really disobedient? . . .) Therefore all good Catholics honour the Pope, the bishops, and the priests, salute them reverently, and obey them, because these priests have received their office from Jesus Christ Himself, and they stand in the place of Jesus Christ. So then, dear children, always honour the priests, and if you chance to meet a priest whom you do not know, salute him also respectfully. And when the priest instructs you about God, or tells you what you must do to save your soul, and to go to Heaven; listen attentively to his words, and obey him very readily as if it were Jesus Christ Himself who spoke to you.

112. Are only the faithful on Earth united together as one Church?

No, the saints in Heaven and the souls in Purgatory are also spiritually united with the faithful on Earth.

As you have heard, all the faithful (the Catholics) on Earth, that is, all those who are still alive, still in this world (Quest. 110), are united together. Now, when a Catholic dies, does he no longer belong to the Church, is he no longer a Catholic? for instance, so and so who died a few days ago, or your own dead grandfather, does he no longer belong to the Catholic Church? Of course he does. It is only when any one is lost, goes to hell, that he no longer belongs to the Church. Therefore the Catechism says: *With the faithful on Earth are united*, that is, with the Christians on Earth are associated the *saints in Heaven*, namely those who have lived good lives and died in the grace of God, and are now happy for all eternity in Heaven (Quest. 2 and 24), and also the holy souls in Purgatory (Quest. 97 to 99). But it says they are *spiritually united*, that is, in a way we cannot see. As we cannot see the spirit, the soul, so also we cannot see, cannot realize with our senses that the saints and the holy souls are united with us. Any one can see that the Catholics are united together on Earth, because they go to the same church, receive the same sacraments, say the same prayers, repeat the same creed. And if you look into a church, and you see people go to confession, receive holy communion, or make the sign of the cross, you know that they are Catholics who belong to us, to the Catholic Church. But you cannot see the saints or the holy souls in Purgatory, therefore you cannot see how they are united with us. But they belong to us, just the same

as children who are gone on a journey, belong to the family, although they are not bodily present with the other children. The saints in Heaven and the souls in purgatory who will also become saints, are, as it were, gone on before, and we shall follow later on and rejoin them.

And just as the children of one family ought to help one another, so the saints help us, by praying for us, and we help the holy souls in purgatory by praying that they may be the sooner released from the fires of purgatory (Quest. 98), and then when those holy souls become saints in Heaven, they pray for us that we may lead good lives and obtain eternal salvation (Remark upon the Festival of All Saints and All Souls).

113. What is this spiritual union called?

The Communion of Saints.

The saints in Heaven, the souls in purgatory, and the faithful on Earth are, as you have heard, spiritually *united*, that is, they form one family. Therefore this community is called the *communion of saints*. Why? The saints are already perfectly holy; the souls in purgatory are also holy, and are certain of becoming perfectly holy, and of entering Heaven; and the Catholics on Earth have all been made holy through the sacrament of baptism (by which they received sanctifying grace), and those who have never lost this grace are really holy, though not yet quite perfect like the saints, because they are still guilty of lesser or venial sins. And those who have lost this sanctifying grace by sin, can be restored to grace again by means of the sacrament of penance. So you see all Catholics have it in their power to obtain eternal salvation. The Church therefore says: Communion of saints, because all who belong to her are either already holy, or have it in their power to become so.

So now, when you say in the creed: 'I believe in the communion of saints', what do you mean by that? I believe that the saints in Heaven, the souls in purgatory, and the Catholics on Earth are united together, belong to one and the same Church.

114. Why did Christ found or establish the Church?

Christ founded or established the Church that, by her means, all men might be brought to eternal life.

Why did Christ *found* or *establish* the Church? That means: Why did Christ ordain that there should be a Church, that there should be apostles, and after them, Pope, bishops, and priests, and that these should rule over the faithful, preach to them, and administer the holy sacraments to them? Christ ordained all this that through them, that is, through the apostles, bishops etc., He might *lead* all men to *eternal life*, that is, *to Heaven*. Just as you form letters by means of your pen, and the pen is therefore necessary to the writing of the letters, so God makes use of the Church, the apostles, the Pope, the bishops, the priests, to lead men to Heaven. How can the Church lead men to Heaven? By the hand? No. How did Jesus Christ lead the people to Heaven then? He told them what they must believe and what they must do (Quest. 72), and He forgave them their sins, and gave them His grace (Magdalen, the man who had been ill 38 years). But Jesus is now no longer visibly on Earth; therefore He appointed the apostles, and after them, the bishops and priests, to do the same as He had done, in His stead, because He is no longer visibly with us, no longer speaks to us audibly, to tell the people what they must believe and do, and to forgive them their sins and dispense grace to them through the holy sacraments.

Therefore, as I have already told you, the bishops and priests stand in the place of Christ, and Catholics must obey them in all spiritual things, as they are bound to obey Christ. Christ speaks to us through the Church (the Pope, the bishops, the priests)—tells men what is God's Will, what they must do to get to Heaven. "He who will not hear you" etc., that is, he who does not obey the Church, is as bad as a heathen, an idolator, and will no more get to Heaven than a heathen who has not been baptized (Quest. 111).

115. What power therefore has Christ given to the Church?

He has given her the power to absolve penitent sinners.

The Church is to lead all men to Heaven. Now, who are those who cannot go to Heaven? Those who have mortal sin upon their souls; because God hates every sin, and will not suffer any one to enter Heaven, who is guilty of sin. But all men are guilty of sin. What must happen then if they are to go to Heaven? The sin must be taken away from them, must be remitted, forgiven. And if the Church is to lead men to Heaven, she must take away their sins, forgive them. Can a man do that? . . . Why not? If you had offended your father, could a neighbour say to you: I forgive you? No, only he whom you have offended can forgive you, no other person can. Whom do men offend when they commit sin? God. Who alone can forgive sin then? God. Then if the Church is to forgive sins, who must give her the power to do so? . . . And this *power* Christ gave to the Church, to the Pope, the bishops and the priests. They can forgive sins in God's name. But it is said further to *penitent sinners*. This means when grown up people have committed sins, these sins can only be forgiven

them if they are contrite (if they are sorry that they have sinned) and do penance. However you will know that better later on. Children who are only guilty of original sin, are not as yet able to excite contrition in themselves, and to do penance. That sin is forgiven without contrition when they are baptized.

116. How do we say this in the Apostles' Creed?

I believe in the Forgiveness of Sins.

Therefore since Christ has given the Catholic Church power to forgive sins, and since we steadfastly believe this, we say in the Apostles' Creed: '*I believe in the forgiveness of sins*', that is, 'I believe that in the Catholic Church sins are forgiven', or, that the Catholic Church has the power from God, to forgive men their sins.

117. How are sins forgiven or remitted?

By the Sacraments of Baptism and Penance.

Men receive forgiveness of sin when they receive the sacrament of baptism or of penance. Little children get remission from original sin in holy baptism. Grown up people who have not been baptized, for instance Jews, receive in the sacrament of baptism the remission of original sin, *and* of all the sins which they may have committed before baptism. Those who have committed sin after baptism, receive forgiveness of these same sins when they receive the sacrament of penance, that is, go to confession and receive absolution. But I will tell you more about that later on.

118. What is Eternal or Everlasting Life?

Everlasting Life is the life of the blessed in Heaven, which has no end.

You say at the end of the creed: (I believe) *in the life everlasting*. By that you mean to say: I believe

that the blessed in Heaven will live for ever (Quest. 13), that their life and their joy and happiness will have no end (Quest. 2 and 94). But will not the damned also live for ever in hell? Most certainly; they cannot die; but their life is so full of torments that it is worse than death, that it would be better for them if they were not to live. Therefore we do not say the damned have eternal life or everlasting life; but we say, they suffer eternal death.

At the end of the creed you say *Amen*. This little word means the same as, *of a truth*, or *truly*. It therefore means: All this is most certainly true. And you should think when you say it: 'I believe all this most firmly, and I will always believe it all my life long.' And as Heaven and eternal life is the last article spoken of in the creed, you should end with the thought of Heaven, and say to yourself: 'I *will* go to Heaven, I will be careful to live a good life that I may be certain of going there.' Often think thus, and never do anything that might shut you out from Heaven; then we may hope that we may one day meet together in this beautiful Heaven, where we shall be happy for ever and ever. Amen.

II. PART.

COMMANDMENTS,

WHICH ALL MUST KEEP.

Up to the present time, dear children, I have explained to you the truths which every body must believe, if they wish to go to Heaven. But do all people go to Heaven who believe these truths? or as the Catechism says:

119. Is it sufficient, for obtaining eternal salvation, that we believe all that God has revealed?

No, we must also keep His commandments.

All that God has revealed, means, 'all that God has said'. Do you reveal anything to your neighbour when you say to him, 'To-day is Monday'? . . . Why not? . . . You only reveal something to him when you tell him something which he did not know before. Now, what God has made known to us, and what Our Lord taught, we did not know before. Therefore it is said, we must believe what God has revealed. Now, when a child *knows* his parents, believes everything they say, and knows well what they wish, for instance, that he should learn his lessons, say his prayers well, and so on, but he does not do it, does not obey, will his parents be satisfied with him? . . . Now, when a child of Our Heavenly Father knows full well and believes everything He says, knows what His holy Will is, but does not do it; will Our Heavenly Father be pleased with him? . . . Are you in this world merely to *know* God? (by faith Quest. 3.) No, you must also love Him and serve Him (Quest. 1), that is, you must do what He orders or commands you, you must *keep His commandments*.

What are God's commandments, which we must keep? I will now explain that to you, and I will speak first about that commandment which is the most important and the most necessary of all.

120. Which is the first or chief commandment, in which all the others are contained?

The commandment of *charity*, namely, the commandment of the *love of God and of our neighbour*.

When your father says: It is my *greatest wish* that my children should be honest; what does he mean by that? He means, 'I have certainly other wishes; but

this is the first and chief wish. So the question: *Which is the first or chief commandment?* is the same as saying: Which is the first and most important commandment? The answer is: *The commandment of the love of God and of our neighbour*, that means, the first and most important commandment is, that we should heartily love God and our neighbour. It is said of this commandment, that *all the other commandments are contained in it*. What does that mean? Suppose a man has a great many shillings in a strong box. Well then, the strong box contains many shillings in it, so any one possessing the strong box possesses also everyone of the shillings in it. In the same way the commandment to love God and our neighbour contains all the other commandments in it, they are contained in it. Therefore any one who faithfully observes the commandment to love God and his neighbour, observes also all the other commandments. Why? A child who loves his parents, does everything his parents command him. And he who really loves God, does everything that God *commands* him, and therefore keeps every one of the commandments. Any one who loves God, will certainly pray to Him, never curse or swear, keep the Sabbath-Day holy; and any one who (according to God's commandment) loves his neighbour, will certainly honour his parents, commit no murder etc.

121. How is the commandment of the love of God expressed?

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, with thy whole mind and with thy whole strength.”

These are the words which Our Blessed Saviour Himself said, when a man once asked Him, which was the first and most important commandment. Our Saviour answered: “Thou shalt love the Lord etc., this is the first and

greatest commandment; and the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

Our dear Lord said first: "Thou shalt love God *with thy whole heart.*" What do you do with your heart? You love. First then, we are commanded to love God heartily, or with our whole heart.

"*With thy whole soul.*" What do you do by means of your soul? You think. What is there that animals cannot do, because they have no (human) soul? They cannot think. We must therefore think often and lovingly of Our Blessed Lord.

"*With thy whole mind.*" People say sometimes, 'Such a one has a happy joyful disposition, or a contented mind; such another is of a sad disposition, or a discontented mind. With our mind, we rejoice or we are sad. We are therefore commanded by God to rejoice in Him, to rejoice that He is so beautiful and so glorious; and we ought to be sad when we ourselves or when others offend God by sin.'

"*With thy whole strength.*" What use do you make of your strength? You work with it. We are commanded then to work for the love of God. When do you work for the love of God? When you do what God has commanded you: pray, go to church, and so on; or you do what your parents and superiors (in God's stead) command; for example, when you think: I will learn my lessons, because that will please God; I will go and fetch water, because mother has told me to do so, and God has commanded me to obey my mother; I will say my prayers etc., that I may please God who loves me so much.

122. Why must we love God?

We must love God, because He is the sovereign and most perfect Good, and every good thing comes from Him.

Two reasons are given, in the Catechism, why we should love God, first, because *He is the sovereign and most perfect Good*. What is meant here by the word "Good"? "Good" used in this way means something that is beautiful, lovely and desirable, which we love and would gladly be possessed of; for instance, the many different fruits which God causes to grow, beautiful grapes etc. which are a boon or a good, because they are beautiful, lovely, and we like so much to have them. But would you give one of your eyes or your good health for all the best fruits in the world? No. How great a blessing, how great a good it is to have our health, and our eyesight so that we may be able to look upon this beautiful world and rejoice! How sad is the fate of the blind, and of those who are sick and ill! To have good health, to have our eyesight is better, is worth more, is a *greater good* than the most delicious fruits in the world. Which would you like best, to live a great many years longer, but to be in bad health, or to die at once? . . . Life is then a greater good than health. Now, God is the *most perfect good*, that is, He is the best and the most precious, there is nothing better or more precious than God. Everything that is good and beautiful in the world, is, as compared with God, more insignificant than a little grain of sand is, compared to a huge mountain. If you were to stand on a high mountain and see the beautiful Sun, rising in glowing splendour, and the beautiful green fields, and the thousand different flowers in all their lovely colours, would you not be delighted with it. But, all this is as nothing compared with the beauty and loveliness of God; God is infinitely more lovely and more glorious. Will you not love this good and glorious God? Every one loves a really good man, a really good, gentle, little child. Our dear Lord is infinitely better, and dearer, and more

gentle than anyone else could possibly be, we must therefore love Him far, far more than even our dearest friends. But we know God too little, we think too little about Him, otherwise we should certainly love Him more. The angels and the saints who are always in the presence of God and see how good and beautiful He is, rejoice so much in Him, love Him so much, that they can think of nothing but Him, and it is their greatest joy to do so.

Secondly, we must love God, *because every good thing comes from Him*. You love your parents, because they are so good to you and give you so much that is good; but God gives you every day and every hour far more than they do: He gives you your food, your clothing, your health, your life; will you not then love Him? If you did not love Him, you would be less grateful than the animals. A dog loves his master and follows him about, and is faithful to him, for the bit of food which his master gives him. A man then who receives so much good, so many benefits from God, and does not love Him, must be less grateful than the animals. If you were blind and anyone were to restore to you your eyesight, would you not love that person and be grateful to him? Does not God give you your eyesight every day? In France, wicked men once put the king and a great many good people to death, and then these wicked men did not know what to do with the poor orphan children of those parents whom they had murdered, so they resolved to tie a stone round the neck of each of them and throw them into the water to get rid of them. Then some good men, at the risk of their own lives, came and took many of these children away and brought them up, and were as kind to them as their own fathers and mothers would have been. Think, my child, if you had been one of those children, and

the rope had been already fastened round your neck, and you had been thrown into the water, and then some kind, good man were to come and save you, and take you to be his child; would you not love him all your life long? O my child! God has done much more than this for you. He, the great and glorious God, to whom the whole world belongs, and whom all the angels obey and serve with such great reverence, He has loved you, a poor insignificant little child, so much that He gave His own Son to die for you. Jesus, the all-powerful Son of God, loved you so much that He died on the cross for you in the midst of the most frightful torments, in order that you might be a child of God and not be condemned to the pains of hell, but go to dwell with Him for ever in Heaven. Will you not love this dear Saviour then? Will you not promise Him that you will always love Him most dearly?

123. How must we love God?

We must love God above all things.

What does that mean: '*Above all things*'? When I say to you, this coat cost *above* ten shillings, I mean that it cost more than ten shillings; so when it is said 'We must love God above all things', it means that we must love Him more than all things. So then, we must love God more than our parents, and our brothers and sisters, more than fine clothes, and pretty books, or play-things etc.

How can we know whether we love God more than all things? or as the Catechism says:

124. How can we know whether we love God above all things?

We know that we love God above all things when, for His sake, we avoid evil and do good.

How do your parents know whether you love them? —A mother had two daughters, Anna and Rosa. Anna fondled over her mother very much, and often went up to her and put her arms round her neck and said: 'Dear mother, I do love you so.' Rosa was quieter, and very seldom said to her mother: 'I love you'; but the mother fell ill, and was obliged to lie in bed. When the children went to school, the mother said: 'Children, don't play in the streets after school; but come straight home to me.' When the school was over, Rosa went straight home, and said to her companions: 'I cannot play to-day, I must go home to my mother who is ill.' But Anna remained with her companions and played, although she knew that that would grieve her mother; now, which child really loved her mother? . . . How did the mother know that? . . . Right; Rosa avoided what would grieve her mother, and did what she told her; she loved her mother more than play or than her companions, but Anna loved her companions and play more than her mother.

Now, who are they who love God above all things? *They who, for His sake*, that is, for God's sake, for the love of God, because God so wills it, *avoid everything*, that is, never do anything which offends God, and take pleasure in doing whatever God wills. For instance, you feel tempted to steal a pretty book, you say to yourself: 'If I steal it, I shall offend God, grieve Him; He will punish me, and He will not love me any longer'; yet if you did steal it, then, the book would be dearer to you than God. Again, you know God has forbidden you to go with bad companions, to play at certain forbidden games, and your companions say to you: 'Come and play with us'; and you do as they wish; then, you love your companions more than God, because you listen to them rather than to God. And just the same if you did not do what God commands you; for

instance, did not go to church on a Sunday, then you would love your ease, your convenience more than God.

You have already promised to love God with all your heart. Now, I will show you, by an example which you will easily remember, how you will do that.

1. You love your parents. Think, if you were in a foreign country, what would you do there (with regard to your parents)? You would often *think lovingly of them*, often long to be with your father and mother. God is your Father and you are now, as it were, in a foreign land. Heaven is your home where your Father is, and where you will one day go; so, if you love God, you will often think lovingly of Him. In the morning, on awaking, your first thought will be of God who is giving you another new day; at your meals you will think how good God is who gives you all things. St. Mary Magdalen of Pazzi once ate an apple; and that which pleased her the most, caused her the most enjoyment, was this thought: 'From all eternity God has thought of and cared for me, and ordained that this apple should grow in order to become food for me; so dearly has God loved me from all eternity.' You also, dear children, should think often and lovingly of God when you have anything which pleases you very much, or when you look at the beautiful fields, rivers, flowers etc.

2. A child who loves his parents takes pleasure in speaking to them, in *being with them*. How delighted a good child is who has been separated from his parents for a long time, when he is with them again, and how pleased he is to remain with them, and to tell them everything that has happened!

So must you also, if you love God, be pleased to be with Him, and to speak to Him. You speak to God when you pray to Him, and you are with Him in a more especial way when you are in the church. So then,

if you love God you will gladly go into the church to pray to Him, and even sometimes when you feel very cold or when you would rather be at play, you will say to yourself: 'I will do this for the love of God, He loves me so much and wishes to be with me, so I will gladly remain with Him.'

A child who loves his parents will cheerfully *obey them*, will avoid anything which displeases them, will try to please them. What will you do, then, if you love God? . . . What is it which displeases God? . . .

The holy martyrs and confessors who shed their blood for the faith (there were even children amongst them), persevered through the most frightful torments; some were burnt, some cut in pieces, some torn by wild beasts, and so on. Why? Because they believed in Jesus and would not deny Him. If they would only have told one lie, have said: 'I am not a Christian', they could have saved their lives. But they loved Jesus more than their lives and died rather than offend Him by committing a sin. So also should you, dear children, rather lose everything, even your life, than offend God mortally. So when you feel tempted to commit a sin, say like Joseph in Egypt: 'How can I do such a thing in God's presence', how can I consent to offend my God thus? ¹

The chief commandment is the commandment of the love of God and of our neighbour. I have told you all that is most necessary for you to know as regards the love of God: I will now explain to you a little about the love of our neighbour.

¹ The conclusion might also be pointed out: How it is a sure sign that a child loves God when he takes pleasure in thinking of God, in praying to Him, and is very particular about obeying His commands; so also is it an equally sure sign that a child does *not* love God when he does not care to think of Him, when he neglects his prayers, and easily breaks God's commandments, thinks nothing of committing sin.

125. What is the commandment of the love of our neighbour?

Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

In order to understand this, you must first know:

126. Who is our neighbour?

Every man, whether friend or foe.

Our Blessed Lord commands us to love our neighbour. Who is our neighbour? Neighbour means the same as near. Now, who are those who are nearest to us? Those who are in our own home, our parents, our brothers and sisters who belong to the same family. But all men belong to the same family; because all men have one and the same Father, God. All men are, therefore, your brothers and sisters, consequently all men are your neighbours. So it is said in the Catechism: (Our neighbour is) *every man, whether he be friend or foe*. That is: every man who is my friend (who loves me and whom I love), is my neighbour; and the man who is my enemy (who dislikes me and wishes to do me harm), is also my neighbour. Whether he be friend or foe makes no difference. We must, therefore, dear children, love all men, wish them well and do good to them when we have an opportunity. We must love our parents, our brothers and sisters and relations; we must also love those who are not related to us, the poor as well as the rich; not merely those who are beautiful and pleasing, but also those who are ugly and ill-shapen; not only the people who live in the same place as ourselves, but also strangers; not only those who love us and are kind to us, but also those who dislike us, hate us, injure us, behave ill to us etc. And why should we love all these?

127. Why must we love all men?

Because all men are the children of one Father in Heaven.

When brothers and sisters do not love each other, quarrel, fight etc., whom do they offend by that? Their parents. Well, what are all men, one to the other, then? When they do not love each other, when they are unkind to each other, whom do they offend? . . . But is it enough if we love good people? . . . If one of your brothers or sisters is naughty, may you cease to love him or her on that account? . . . So you must, then, love also all those who behave ill to you; such is the Will of Our Heavenly Father. If any one vexes you or strikes you, you must not get into a passion, and vex or beat him in return. You must think to yourself: 'I will forgive him this, I will be friends with him again, because such is the Will of my Heavenly Father.'¹ You also, dear children, have very often offended God, and He is so good that He has willingly forgiven you. You must, therefore, willingly forgive those who offend you; otherwise God will not forgive you any more, He will not love you any more; but will punish you severely. Therefore, we pray every day "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us"; that is: 'Dear Heavenly Father, forgive me my sins, I will forgive from my heart all who have offended me, vexed me or beaten me.'²

¹ When St. Benedict Joseph was beaten by a companion at school, far from striking the boy again, he did not even get angry, and when the master noticed that the other boy beat him, and wished to punish him for it, Benedict Joseph begged the master not to punish him, and tried to excuse the boy who had beaten him.

² (Example of Christ on the cross; St. Stephen praying for his enemies.)

128. When do we love our neighbour as ourselves?

We love our neighbour as ourselves when we obey the commandment of Christ: Do unto others as you would be done unto.

Our Blessed Lord said: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." People might have said: Yes, but how must we do that? So, Our Lord explained and said: "*Do unto others as you would*" etc. Now, what do you wish others to do to you? . . . How do you wish other children to behave to you? . . . Then, how must you behave to them? . . . If you were hungry and you saw another child with a large slice of bread and butter, what would you wish? . . . What must you do, then, when you have food and you see a poor hungry child? . . . If another child, for instance, your little sister, had some apples and brought them home and you had none: What would you wish? . . . What must you also do, then? . . . When you have no pen, or no pencil, and another child has two etc.? . . . When you are ill, what do you wish? That your brothers and sisters and other children should run about in the streets and not come and see you? No; what should you do, then? . . . You see, then, that what you like others also like, and as you wish they should do to you, so you also must do to them.

But there is still something further; what you do not like, others do not like either; therefore, what you would not like others to do to you, that you must not do to them. Now, what, for instance, do you not like others to do to you? If you happen to fall down, or if you give a silly answer in class, do you like the others to laugh at you? . . . What should you not do, then, if another child falls etc.? . . . When you are punished what do you not like? Should you, then, go and talk about another child having been punished? . . . Why? . . .

Mark this well, dear children, God has strictly enjoined that you should love all men. So, if you hate or dislike a single person and wish him or do him harm, then, you will displease God. But if you are good and amiable and friendly towards others, and help them when you can etc., then, your Heavenly Father will love you and help you, and all good people will love you, and you will receive a great reward in Heaven. But can you already do good to others? Certainly you can. You can be obliging and willing to go any little errand for any one. You cannot, of course, give anything to the poor without your parents permission; but you can ask your parents; you can say: 'There is a poor man there, may I give him something?' as the venerable Maria Crescentia did when she was quite a little child. When a beggar came at meal-times, she would lay down her spoon immediately, and beg her parents with uplifted hands to allow her to give her food to the poor man; then, she would spring up with the plate, and run quickly to the poor man and say very kindly and sweetly: 'May God bless you!'

Again, if there are any of your schoolfellows who cannot learn as quickly as you; you can help them with their lessons; you can visit sick children; and you can pray for every body, more especially for poor heathens and heathen children (Quest. 53) and for poor sinners. And if you hear that any one is very ill indeed, or in great trouble, and you cannot help him, then, you can think: 'I will say an Our Father that God may help him.' Now, think, dear children, have you not already had many opportunities of doing such good works as these?

129. Where is the duty of loving God and our neighbour more fully declared?

In the Ten Commandments of God.

In the two commandments of love are included or contained all the other commandments (II, Quest. 120). That which is contained, enclosed, locked up in a box, cannot be seen so long as the box is not unlocked. So men could not have seen everything which was contained in the commandments of love if God had not, as it were, opened them, or as the Catechism says: *more fully* explained them one after the other (as, for instance, if I say to you): To get to R. you must go through N.; I shall have told you the way briefly; but if I say: You must go this way to such a place, then, you will come to that house or that cross, then, to W., then, turn to the left etc. I shall have told you the way more fully, and you will find it more easily. So then, what God has told us briefly in the commandments of love, he has more fully explained to us in the ten commandments.

First, I shall only tell you a few things about *the ten commandments in general*, or as a whole; then, I shall explain them to you singly, one after the other.

OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS IN GENERAL.

130. What are the Ten Commandments of God?

1. I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me.

2. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy God, in vain.

3. Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-Day.

4. Honour thy father and thy mother.

5. Thou shalt not kill.

6. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

7. Thou shalt not steal.

8. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

9. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife.

10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods.

131. From whom did we get the Ten Commandments?

From God Himself, who gave them to His servant Moses, in the midst of thunder and lightning on Mount Sinai.

When God gave the ten commandments to the people of Israel (the Jews), He first, through His *servant* (one who obeyed Him faithfully and made known His commands to the Israelites) *Moses*, told the Jews that they were to prepare themselves during three days, and then come up to Mount Sinai. Now, when they came there, the great high mountain was covered with a dark cloud; and it was as if it were on fire, and it smoked and trembled. It thundered and lightened as it does in a very terrible storm. The people were dreadfully frightened. Then God spoke out of the cloud to the Jews and declared to them the ten commandments. Later on, God Himself wrote the ten commandments and gave them to His servant Moses.

Why did God give the ten commandments *in the midst of thunder and lightning*? Namely, whilst it was thundering and lightning, people are frightened when there is a storm, because one flash of lightning might cause the death of many people, or the destruction of much property. It was God's Will that the Jews should be frightened, that they should see how powerful He is, how much He is to be feared, and how severely He is able to punish those who do not obey Him, and think: 'We will most carefully obey God so that He may not be angry with us.' The Jews were, therefore, very much frightened and said: 'All that the Lord has commanded, that will we do.'

What should you learn by that, dear children?

1. The Jews had to prepare themselves and to listen with great reverence when God gave them the ten commandments. These same commandments, I will now explain to you in the name of God. So you also must listen with great reverence, and when I tell you what God requires of you in each commandment,—what you must do, then you must say as the Jews did: ‘All that the Lord has commanded me, that I will most certainly do.’

2. Fear to break one of these holy commandments and thus to offend the great and glorious God. If you feel tempted to commit any sin, say: No, I will not do it, I should offend God by it, and He is able to punish me very severely, yes, even to casting me down into hell. When there is a storm, do not be afraid if only you are good, because God does not let anything bad happen to good children. Think when it thunders and lightens very much: ‘God is warning me that I may never offend Him; I will be very careful never to do so.’

132. On what did God write the Ten Commandments?

On two tables of stone.

God wrote the ten commandments Himself on *tables* or tablets of stone. God did this that the Jews might not forget His commandments, and as a sign that they must keep them for ever. Because that which is written on stone, lasts a long time and can still be read after many hundreds of years. You will hear presently why there were *two* tables.

133. What Commandments were on the first table?

On the first table were the First Three Commandments of loving and honouring God.

As you have already heard, the two commandments of love are more fully explained in the ten commandments of God. The first and chief commandment is that of the love of God, because he who really loves God, loves also his neighbour, and does in all things as God wills: One thing only is necessary, that is, to love God.

This commandment of love is explained in the *three first* of the ten commandments, that is, in these three first commandments we are told, what we must do, and what we must not do, in order to love and honour God rightly. These three commandments were on the first table of stone.

134. What Commandments were on the second table?

On the second table were the Seven Other Commandments of the love of our neighbour.

In these seven commandments *the love of our neighbour* is explained to us, that is, we are told what we must do, and what we must not do that we may not offend or injure our fellow-creatures; but love them rightly.

§ 1. Of the First Three Commandments.

135. What does God chiefly bid us do in the First Commandment?

God bids us to believe in Him, to hope in Him, and to love Him, above all things, and to adore Him alone ¹.

¹ [Where the text of the first commandment: "I am the Lord, thy God etc.", is made the basis of the instruction, it might be explained thus: God says, I am the Lord, thy God, that is, I am the Almighty Lord of Heaven and Earth; I created thee, thou belongest to me both body and soul; therefore, thou must honour and serve me. I alone am God, thy Lord; therefore, thou shalt not have strange (= other) gods before me, that is, thou shalt no honour, believe in, and serve others (men, animals, Sun etc.), as

The Catechism asks: What does God *chiefly* bid, that is, what is the principal, the first, the chief thing which God bids us do in the first commandment? For God bids and forbids in the first commandment many other things which will not be told to you now (and that is the case also with the other commandments). The most important point for you now, is, first, *that we must believe in Him*, that is, we must firmly hold for very truth that God is our Lord and only God, and must firmly hold for very truth all that God has revealed to us. And why must we believe this? Because God speaks only the truth, because everything which He says, can only be the truth (Quest. 4). And then we must hope in God (Quest. 72), that is, we must hold for truth and most firmly believe that God will give us what He has promised us, namely Heaven, and all that is necessary for us in order to get to Heaven. Now, what is necessary for that? That God should give us His grace (Quest. 107 and 108); that He should forgive us our sins (Quest. 115). So what must we believe that God will give us? . . . And why must we believe this? . . . When you need clothes, who do you hope will give them to you? . . . Why? Because your parents love you the most, and are so good to you. Would you hope that a stranger or a miser would buy clothes for you? . . . Why not? . . . Now see, God is infinitely good and merciful to us, that is, His mercy and His goodness have no end, are without limit. He is always good and has compassion on us

thou honourest, believest, and servest me (as the heathens do); otherwise thou, as it were, placest them before God, likenest them unto Him; and that would be a great dishonouring of God, as it would be a dishonour for thee if any one were to liken thee to an animal. Again: "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image to adore it", that is, thou shalt not make idols and adore them as the heathens do.]

(Quest. 81), because we are so poor and miserable, and He will willingly help us to get to Heaven. Indeed, He has even promised us that He will take us up to Heaven, if only we do His Will, and when God promises anything, He most surely and certainly keeps His promise, for He is faithful and true (we call those people faithful and true who strictly keep their promises).

Further, we are told in the first commandment, to *love God above all things* (Quest. 123). And why must we love God above all things? (Quest. 122.)

Lastly we are commanded to *adore God alone*; that is, we must pray to God and tell Him that we believe in Him, hope in Him, and love Him above all things, and that we will always obey Him; because He is our God and our Supreme Lord and Master. So it is God *alone* whom we must adore, because He alone is God, He alone created us, to Him alone we belong.

Now, how could children sin against this commandment?

1. You would sin against *faith* if you refused to believe any one truth which God has revealed (I am telling you in these instructions what God has revealed), for instance, if you were voluntarily to think to yourself: 'I do not believe that there is one God in three persons'; or, 'it is not true that God is everywhere present'; or if you deliberately think: 'it is not very certain that God is eternal', or, 'I cannot quite believe that Jesus is in the Blessed Sacrament' etc. That would be a great sin, because then you would think: 'God has not told the truth, God has lied'; that would certainly be a dreadful offence against God. I said, if you were to think that voluntarily, because, if such a thought were to come to you and you did not entertain it, would have nothing to do with it, banished it out of your mind; then it would not be a sin. Therefore, whenever such a thought comes to you, say immediately: 'O my God,

I believe everything which Thou hast revealed'; or, 'O my God, I believe in Thee, because Thou art eternal truth.'

Children also sin against faith, when they will not take any trouble to learn the faith, will not pay any attention to the religious instruction, will learn nothing, and so on.

2. You would sin against *hope*, if you were to think: 'I shall never get to Heaven, God will not help me, He will not forgive me my sins' etc.

3. You would sin against *charity*, if you did not love God, if your parents, companions, playthings were dearer to you than God, if you were to forget God entirely, and never take pleasure in thinking of Him.

4. You would sin against the debt of *adoration* which you owe to God, if you were to altogether omit your night and morning prayers, or to say them very carelessly, thinking voluntarily about other things all the time, and if you would not go to Mass etc.

Faith, hope and charity are called the three Theological Virtues. You received them from God in holy baptism; whilst you were still very little children, you had faith, hope and charity; but you did not know it. You were not yet able to say anything to God. God is pleased, when we often tell Him that we believe in Him, hope in Him, and love Him, or when we make acts of faith, hope and charity; He has in fact commanded us to do so.

136. When are children obliged to make acts of Faith, Hope and Charity?

As soon as they have come to a sufficient use of their reason.

Children are obliged, that is, God has commanded them; *to make acts of faith, hope and charity*: namely, to say to God that they believe in Him, hope in Him,

and love Him¹; *as soon as they come to a sufficient use of their reason*, that is, as soon as they are able to make as much use of their reason as is necessary for awakening in themselves acts of faith, hope and charity. What does that mean? What use do you make of your reason? You use it to think, to know. As soon, therefore, as you are able to think and to know as much about God as is necessary, in order to believe in Him etc., so soon is it your duty to make acts of faith, hope and charity.

Can little children do this already? No, very little children have their reason, it is true, but they cannot yet make use of it; just as they have their arms, feet etc., but cannot yet make use of them to walk, to work, and so on. Children of about four or five years of age are able to make use of their reason, but not yet sufficiently; it is true they now know something about God, but not yet enough; for instance, they do not yet know that God has revealed many things, and that He is the very truth etc. All of you who are here, are in a position to make acts of faith, hope and charity; you are, therefore, obliged to do so.

137. How can we make acts of Faith, Hope and Charity?

In the following manner:

O my God! I believe in Thee, because Thou art unerring truth;

O my God! I hope in Thee, because Thou art infinitely faithful and merciful;

¹ The three Theological Virtues are, as it were, sleeping in the heart. A man who is asleep, must first be awakened before he can work or do anything, otherwise he is as if he were dead, can do nothing etc. In the same way we must awaken, as it were, these virtues, otherwise they are of no use to us.

O my God! I love Thee, because Thou art infinitely good and infinitely worthy of love.

So when you wish to make acts of faith, hope and charity, say:

'O my God! I believe in Thee, because Thou art unerring truth.' That is the same as if you were to say to God: 'O my God! I hold everything for very truth which Thou hast revealed, because Thou art *truth* itself, therefore can'st never deceive; and because Thou art *unerring*, therefore can'st never err, never be mistaken, never can'st say anything which is false.'

You go on to say: *'O my God! I hope in Thee, because Thou art infinitely faithful and merciful'*, that is: 'O my God! I trust and believe firmly that Thou wilt give me eternal salvation, and everything which I need to obtain it (Quest. 135); and this I most steadfastly hope, because Thou lovest us so much, and hast so great compassion on us, Thy poor creatures, because Thy love, Thy compassion has no bounds, and because Thou Thyself hast promised it, and Thou art most faithful and true to Thy promises.'

Lastly you say: *'O my God! I love Thee, because Thou art infinitely good'* etc., that is: 'O my God! I love Thee most heartily, and will most faithfully serve Thee, because Thou art so good, so beautiful, infinitely more beautiful and more worthy to be loved than all else in the world, and because Thou lovest me so much and givest me so many blessings.'

Often say these three prayers very devoutly; God takes pleasure in them, and loves you the more for praying thus. Good children say them every day.

138. Is it not against the First Commandment to honour and invoke the saints?

No, on the contrary, it is right and salutary to honour and invoke the saints.

This question means: Is it not a sin against the first commandment, when we honour and invoke the saints? Who are *the saints*? Can you name some to me? . . . What do you say in the 'Hail, Mary' after the words: 'Fruit of thy womb, Jesus?' 'Holy Mary' etc. Saint and holy mean the same thing; therefore, Mary, the Mother of God, is a saint. Who knows any other saints? . . . What was the name of the chief of the apostles? . . . Where are these saints? . . . Yes, they served God faithfully on Earth, and were good and pious, therefore, God took them up to Heaven, where they will be happy for ever.

Now, when do we honour these saints (for example the Blessed Virgin)? When we have a great reverence for and devotion to them, when we love them, take pleasure in thinking of them, praise them for having lived such good lives, and for being now so glorious in Heaven, when we think, 'I will try to live as good a life as these saints have done', and also when we pray to them.

When do we invoke them? If you have a basket to carry, and you cannot lift it up, and you see your brother; what do you do? You call to him, call upon him, beg him to come and help you; so also we call upon the saints, beg them to help us.

The Catechism says: *It is right and salutary* to honour and invoke the saints; that is, it is just, it is right with Almighty God, God is pleased that we honour and invoke the saints, and it is to our own salvation, that is, we obtain eternal salvation sooner, get more easily to Heaven, if we honour the saints, take pleasure in thinking of them, try to imitate them, and call upon them for help. Do you not yourselves see that God is pleased with this? Is not a father pleased, when his child is honoured? Well, the saints are God's dearest

children, and will not one who loves to think of the Blessed Virgin, to pray to her etc., get to Heaven sooner than one who does not do this?

But why do we not offend against the first commandment, when we honour the saints? We honour the saints in quite a different way from the way in which we honour God, that is to say, there is a great distinction between the honour we render to God, and the honour we render to the saints.

139. What difference is there between the honour we pay to God, and that which we pay to the saints?

We adore God alone as our Supreme Master; and we honour the saints as the friends of God.

Notice the difference in the few words “we adore God *alone*”; we do not adore the saints, God alone we honour as our *Supreme* Lord: Our *Lord* or Master is He to whom we belong, He who has the right to command us (Quest. 11); therefore, your father is your lord and master, also the king, or queen, also the bishop, because you belong to your father, to the land over which the king rules, to the diocese over which the bishop has authority (Quest. 111); and all these have the right to command you. But to whom do you especially belong both body and soul? Whom must you obey above all, and in all things? Who is higher than your father, or the king, or queen, or the bishop? . . . Who created them all? Who has command over them all? . . . Therefore, God is the *Supreme Lord*; we honour Him as our Supreme Lord, when we tell Him that we belong wholly to Him, that we believe in Him, love Him above all things, and will always most strictly obey Him. And when we do this, then we adore God (Quest. 135).

We honour the saints also, but not as our supreme masters; we do not belong to them, they did not create

us, they have not the right to command us, therefore, we must not adore them; but we may tell them that we love them, because they served God so faithfully, and because they are now with God, and God loves them so much; because they are the *friends of God* (friends are people who love each other; enemies are those who do not love each other or hate each other).

140. What difference is there between the prayers which we offer to God and those which we offer to the saints?

We pray to God that He may help us by His Almighty Power; but to the saints that they may help us through their intercession with God.

You pray to God for Him to help you; for instance, to cure you, forgive you your sins etc. How do you think that God will help you? Must God first ask somebody, beg of somebody that He may help you? Most certainly not. God needs no one, He can do everything He wills; He is Almighty, therefore, we ask God *to help us by His Almighty Power*. But you pray also, for instance, to the Blessed Virgin that she may help you, that you may be cured, that you may always remain a good child. Now, do you mean by that that the Blessed Virgin shall herself cure you, make you good, forgive you your sins, give you grace? No, God alone can do that; but what can the Blessed Virgin do then, and the other saints? They can beg of God to cure us, to forgive us etc., because He will be sure to hear the Blessed Virgin and the saints, more readily than you; just as a father grants the petitions of his good children, sooner than those of the bad. So when you are cured, who has helped you? God, how? . . . Why has God helped you? . . . Who has, therefore, helped you to recover your health? . . . The Blessed Virgin, but

how? Therefore, we pray to God, saying: 'Lord, have mercy on us, forgive us our sins' etc., and to the saints we say: 'Holy Mary, pray for us, poor sinners' etc., 'Pray for us, O Holy Joseph' etc., and although we do say: Blessed Mother, help! We only mean: Help us by thy intercession.

In the first commandment, God forbids us to make idols, to adore them, as the heathens do (Quest. 135, note). For we must adore only God. But we have pictures of Christ and of the saints. Are they also forbidden? No, they are not idols, and we do not adore them, we only venerate them; and that is quite right, as you will see by the next question.

141. Should we also honour the images of Jesus Christ and of the saints?

Yes, certainly; for if a child honours the likenesses of his parents, so much the more must we honour the images of Our Lord and of His saints.

This answer of the Catechism is rather long, so I will explain it to you a little at a time. It says: *Yes, certainly*, that is, yes, it is most true, *that we should honour the images of Jesus Christ* (in which Jesus Christ is represented, crucifix etc.), *and of His saints* (the Blessed Virgin etc.). ('How' we must do that, will be shown later on.)

It is further pointed out in the Catechism *why* we should honour these images; *for if a child* etc. This contains two statements: 1. children honour the likenesses of their parents; 2. so much the more must we honour the images of Our Lord (that is Jesus Christ) and of His saints.

Imagine if your father were obliged to go into a foreign country for many years, and after a time he

sent you a beautiful portrait of himself. Would you throw away this portrait, toss it into a corner, make it dirty etc.? No, for by thus showing disrespect to the picture, you would also show that you had no reverence and love for your father. What would you be much more likely to do? You would have it framed and hung up in a suitable place, and you would look upon it with pleasure, and thus be reminded of your father. That is how you would *honour* the portrait of your father.

You must honour the images of Jesus Christ and of His saints far more than that. Why? Because Jesus Christ is the Son of God and infinitely higher than your parents, and has done you infinitely more good (what?), and because the saints are no longer creatures liable to sin, as your parents and all who are on Earth are, but beloved children and friends of God. How must you honour these pictures? You must 1. not dishonour them, not throw them away disdainfully, scoff at them etc. 2. You should honour them by having little pictures in your prayer-book; and when you look on them, think of the blessed saints, and pray to them. And never forget to bow respectfully when you pass by a crucifix.

Now, since you know how agreeable it is to God, when you invoke the saints: I exhort you,

1. to pray fervently to the saints, especially to the Blessed Mother of God, who is also your Heavenly Mother. Say the "Hail, Mary" often and devoutly, recite also the holy Rosary with great devotion. Never let a day pass without invoking this Blessed Mother.

There is one other saint besides the Blessed Virgin to whom you must pray more especially, it is your name-saint, that means, the saint whose name you bear, the one whose name was given you in holy baptism. N., who is your name-saint? . . . You can pray to your patron-saint and say: 'O holy saint N., pray for me

that I may faithfully keep the sanctifying grace which I received in holy baptism, and one day be with you in Heaven.'

2. Never dishonour a sacred picture or image. A few years ago a soldier dishonoured a crucifix very much; for he broke the arms and feet off the statue, at the same time scoffing and uttering impious words. But how did God punish him? In the war, his own arms and feet were cut off in precisely the same way as he had done to the crucifix. He then repented of his sins, and exhorted all those who visited him, never to be so wicked as he had been, but to honour God and His saints, and to show respect also to holy pictures.—So then resolve never to dishonour holy pictures, but far rather to respect and honour them (as I have told you before); and when you look upon these pictures, think of the holy saints and pray to them that they may also pray for you, and that you may join them in Heaven.

We come now to the second commandment: *Thou shalt not take the name of God in vain*, that is, not pronounce it unnecessarily, carelessly. God *forbids* us something here; what is it?

142. What does God chiefly forbid in the Second Commandment?

He forbids the dishonouring of His Holy Name,

1. by pronouncing it without reverence,
2. by cursing and blaspheming,
3. by false and unnecessary swearing.

How could we dishonour the holy name of God? If we did what? . . .

The church, dear children, is a holy place, therefore, we must hold the church sacred and enter it reverently. We must not transact worldly business in the church, make bargains, trade, as in the market. Still worse

would it be if anyone were to do anything sinful in church, to make use of the church for any bad purpose. As the church is a holy place, so also the name of God is a holy name; therefore, we must keep it holy, pronounce it with reverence. We must

1. *not pronounce it irreverently*, like any ordinary word; we must not say it without reverence, that is, so that anyone who heard us, would know that we had no reverence for this holy name. It is an irreverence when a child says at every trifling thing: O Lord! or makes a jest with the name of God. Still worse would it be if a child were to use the name of God in anger, for that would be using the name of God to commit sin (to express sinful anger).

2. We must not dishonour the name of God *by cursing or blaspheming*, that is, we must not say words by which we curse or blaspheme. We must, therefore, not *curse*, that is, not misuse the name of God to wish evil to others (for instance: May God punish you! May thunder and lightning strike you!). We must not *blaspheme*. We blaspheme God when we say something bad of Him, for instance, when things go badly with wicked people and they say: 'God is not just' etc.

3. We must *not swear falsely or lightly*. What is meant by swearing or taking an oath? I will explain that. Suppose you were accused of having stolen apples during Vespers one Sunday, and you were present at Vespers on that Sunday, and your school-fellow, N., saw you there, what would you do? You would say: 'I did not steal the apples, I was at Vespers', and you would call N. as a witness, to say that what you said, was true, that you were at Vespers. Now, suppose you were accused of having taken something when you were quite alone in a room, and nobody was by, could you then call anybody as a witness? . . . But who would

have seen it? . . . Who sees everything? . . . Whom can you then call to witness that you have not taken anything? . . . Well now, he who calls God to witness, who says: 'God is my witness that my statement is true'; 'God knows it is true', 'As true as God is in Heaven' etc., such a one swears. Swearing is not always forbidden. Sometimes people are obliged to swear; the magistrate commands them to do so. We are only forbidden to swear *lightly*, that is, where there is no necessity. Children may never swear, it is never necessary for them. And still less may anyone *swear falsely*. Who swears falsely? He who says 'God is my witness that this is true', and it is nevertheless false; for instance, you are accused of having stolen something from somebody, and it is true; now, you say; 'God is my witness (or something similar) that I have *not* done it.' Then you will have sworn falsely. Why? . . .

He who swears falsely commits a great sin, for he tells God, as it were, that He must help him to tell a lie, and says: 'I will know nothing more of God', 'I will have no part in God, and in Heaven', and he says, as it were, to God: 'Punish me if you can.' Therefore, such people often die suddenly, God punishes them. And others there are who do not die suddenly, yet have no more *peace* in their souls. They always hear something saying to them in their hearts: 'Thou hast sworn a false oath' (he who swears, takes an oath, therefore, he who swears falsely takes a false oath); 'thou hast no more part in God, God will punish thee.'

143. Does the Second Commandment forbid anything else besides the dishonouring of the Name of God?

It forbids, also, the dishonouring of the names of the saints, and of holy things; such as the Holy Cross, the Sacraments, and the like.

You have heard that we are forbidden to dishonour the name of God, because it is holy. But there are also other names which are holy, therefore, we are also forbidden to dishonour them. Such are the *names of saints*, for example, Mary, Anthony etc.; or *names of holy things*, such as, Cross, Sacrament, Heaven etc. Therefore, we must not lightly use these words, for example, Holy Mary! Holy Anthony! We must not use them in jest, and still less in anger; and it would be worse than all if we were to use these holy names in blasphemy and say something bad, insulting about the saints, or the holy sacraments etc.

The saints are the children and friends of God; holy things belong more especially to God, are more especially his property, his possession. If you were to abuse or insult children before their father, or you were to ruin his property, would you not offend him very much by doing so? What would you do then if you were to dishonour the saints or holy things (through irreverent expressions)?

Dear children! This sin against the second commandment happens very frequently, and unfortunately I have reason to fear there may be some amongst you who dishonour the holy name of God, and holy things. What does anyone do who uses the name of God in anger or to curse etc.?

1. He grieves (humanly speaking) Almighty God. Do you think it does not grieve a father (mother) when a child whom he loves so much, and to whom he is so good, insults him to his face, and makes use of his name to speak insulting and angry words? And does it not grieve Our Heavenly Father when you, His children, behave so to Him? The name of God is so holy that the angels even pronounce it only with fear and reverence; the Jews did not dare even to pronounce the

name of "God"; but, instead of this holy name, they were obliged to say "The Lord"; and you are not afraid to use this name to commit sin? Would you dare to curse if the Saviour stood visibly before you? . . . Was God not present then when you did it? . . . You have then, as it were, insulted Him to His face. How much that must have grieved Him?

2. Anyone who curses or swears, deserves severe punishment. By God's command the Jews sentenced all those who blasphemed His holy name, to be stoned to death. At the present time people are no longer punished by the law for cursing; but God will punish them all the more surely. Very often He punishes them already in this world. A few years ago, a man who had been in the habit of cursing very terribly, had his tongue so swollen that he could no longer keep it in his mouth, and he died in the most frightful agony. At any rate, God punishes such people after their death. Those who use the name of God thoughtlessly, will have to suffer severe pain in purgatory¹. And those who (knowingly and voluntarily) curse, blaspheme, swear falsely, will be punished eternally in hell if they do not repent of these sins before their death. How many children are now suffering terrible pains, and think: 'O if only I had not said that!' but it is too late!

Dear children, you have perhaps hitherto committed such sins, because you did not know it was so wicked; but now you know it, so take great care to avoid these sins in future. Those who have not hitherto dishonoured the holy name of God, should thank God that He has preserved them from it, and beg that He will continue

¹ (Care should be taken not to represent all thoughtless using of the holy name as a mortal sin. Such exaggerations often have very sad consequences; make a false conscience, and are the occasion of mortal sins being committed, where otherwise they would not be.

to preserve them from it for the future. If you hear anyone curse (and this applies to you all), never laugh, but say: "May God forgive him!" or "Hallowed be Thy name!" Those who have the bad habit of lightly using the name of God, should every morning, when they say in the "Our Father" 'Hallowed be Thy name', pause a little and think: 'My God, by Thy help, I will keep Thy name holy, I will not dishonour it this day.' And when anyone without thinking allows a word of this kind to escape his lips (when it happens inadvertently, it is not a great sin, provided you take pains to break yourself of the habit), then he should say at once: 'Forgive me, dearest Lord!' or 'Hallowed be Thy name!' or an 'Our Father'.

But I trust that all of you will always pronounce the name of God with great reverence, both at your prayers and at other times. It is proper, every time you repeat the name of Jesus in your prayers, to bow your head. Often say with great reverence: "May Jesus Christ be praised!"

144. What are we commanded by the Third Commandment?

1. To keep holy the Lord's Day, that is, the Sunday, to sanctify it by doing good works, especially, by hearing holy Mass and the word of God.

2. Not to break the Sunday by servile work or sinful pleasures.

The third commandment says: Thou shalt keep holy the Sabbath-Day. The Jews' Sabbath was on Saturday; but Christians have to keep the *Sunday* holy. Sunday is called the day of the Lord, that is, the day which belongs to the Lord (but do not all days belong to the

Lord? Truly, but the others, the work-days, He has, as it were, given to us, we can work then etc., but the Sunday He has kept for Himself, we must serve Him more especially on that day). This day of the Lord we must *keep holy*. You have already heard about holy places (churches) and about holy names (in the second commandment); how must we keep these holy? What must we do in the church? . . . What may we not do? . . . How may we use holy names? . . . And how may we not use them? . . . Well now, the Sunday is a holy day, therefore, we must keep it holy:

1. by doing *good works*, works pleasing to God, for instance, praying, giving alms to the poor, visiting the sick, reading pious books etc. But above all we must hear the *holy Mass and the word of God*, that is, the sermon or religious instruction, wherein the priest makes known to us the word of God, what God has said;

2. we must not spend the Sunday like an ordinary day or work-day (just as we may not make use of the church for ordinary business). That would be to break the Sabbath, that is, we should then be using it not as a holy day; not keeping it holy, as we are commanded to do. We must not, therefore, do any work, on a Sunday, such as is generally done on a work-day, no *servile work*, such as servants, work-people do; for instance, we must not work in the fields on a Sunday; workmen (tailors, shoemakers etc.) may not work at their trade; women may not sew or wash etc., but we break the Sabbath still more when we make use of it to commit sin or in taking *sinful pleasures*, that is, when people allow themselves amusements which are sinful, wherein sin is committed (just the same as when one uses a church to commit sin).

What should you do on Sunday-afternoons? You should as often as possible go to Vespers, when you have

not too far to go, and your parents give you leave. When Vespers are over, you may take a walk, or play a little while with good children. So you must all 1) avoid going with bad companions, 2) not be too boisterous in your games so as to disturb people. It is also a very good thing when children take pleasure in reading good books on the Sunday, for instance, the Lives of the Saints, or in looking at the pictures in such books. You would also do quite right to learn your Catechism or Bible History on the Sunday (or do any other school-exercise), especially children who have not much time on a week-day, or who are very backward.

I have now explained to you the three parts of the ten commandments which were written on the first table of stone. We now come to the seven last commandments which were written on the second table. What are these last about?

§ 2. Of the Seven Last Commandments.

145. What does God command by the Fourth Commandment?

He commands us to honour, love, and obey our parents and superiors.

God commands that every child shall 1. *honour* his parents. A child honours his parents when he esteems and reverences them, when he speaks respectfully to them, and behaves towards them in such a manner that everyone can see that he respects them. Little Peter certainly does not care very much for his parents, for he takes pleasure in telling other children about whatever faults his parents have, and makes fun of them; and when his parents tell him to do anything, he gives rude answers, says: 'Do it yourself' etc.; he never says 'Good morning' to his parents, and often feels ashamed of his

father, because he is poor. Philip, on the contrary, always speak well of his parents, and always says 'Good morning' when he first gets up, and 'Good night' before he goes to bed etc., and when they tell him to do anything, he listens attentively, and always answers them cheerfully and respectfully. Peter does not honour his parents; he dishonours them; why? . . . Philip does honour his parents; why? ¹ . . .

In the fourth commandment children are also commanded to

2. *love* their parents. If you love a person, what do you wish to cause him: vexation or pleasure? . . . A child who loves his parents, will not, therefore, cause them vexation, but will try to please them.

Now, how do you displease your parents? By idleness, disobedience, quarrelling with your brothers and sisters etc. What must you not do then? . . . And how do you give pleasure to your parents? By being obedient, cheerful, good-natured and peaceable with your brothers and sisters, diligent at school and at home etc. You who are still young, cannot do much for your parents yet; but you can ask some one to do good to them. Whom should you ask? . . . What will a child who loves his parents, do for them then? . . . Yes, pray often for them; pray for them at your morning and night prayers and also at the holy Mass.

Lastly God enjoins that children shall

3. *obey* their parents, that is, do what they tell them. Charles' father calls to him when he is out at play, and tells him to come in; Charles pretends not to hear, and does not come. Charles has sinned against the fourth commandment; he did *not obey*. Another time Charles

¹ Examples might be given from the Bible History: Ham did not honour his father; Joseph, on the contrary, honoured his father Jacob etc.

goes in when his father calls him, but not, until he has been called several times, and he goes very slowly. He has again committed a fault, he did not obey *at once*. A third time Charles goes in at once; but he does so very unwillingly and looks very cross. He has again committed a fault, because he has obeyed *unwillingly*. What must you do then when your parents order you to do anything? You must obey them at once quickly and willingly.

There is one sin which I have not yet named, which children could commit against their parents (may God preserve you from ever committing it!); it is cursing their parents, wishing evil may happen to them, or raising their hand to strike them. O children! that is a frightful sin. A child who does that deserves that his tongue with which he cursed his parents, should be torn out, and that the hand which he raised against them, should be chopped off.

If your parents were going to punish you when you were innocent, might you not defend yourself? For instance, your father is going to punish you, because he thinks you have broken a window, and you have not done it. What must you do in that case? Blessed Benedict Joseph was once accused of a fault of which he was innocent, and received a very sharp rebuke from his master. Benedict Joseph said very meekly to the master that he had not committed the fault, and his master said he was telling an untruth, and ordered him, as a punishment, to kneel down. Benedict Joseph obeyed immediately without being in the least refractory or unwilling, and thought in his heart: 'Although I am innocent this time, yet I have deserved this punishment at other times.' So you also, if your father is going to punish you, and you are not guilty, should say: 'Father, please do not punish me, I have not done it.' But if

your father does not believe you and punishes you all the same, may you resist, or scream out with all your might, or run away? No, you must, in God's name, submit to the punishment and think: 'If I have not deserved it this time, yet I have deserved it at other times.'

You have now heard how children must honour, love and obey their parents. But God orders us also in the fourth commandment to honour, love and obey our *superiors*. Our superiors are people who have command over us. Now, who has a right to command you besides your parents? Who has a right to command you in school? . . . The master is, therefore, your superior, in the school. Who has a right to command you in spiritual things? . . . These persons are, therefore, superiors. Now, what do you owe to them? . . . How does a child honour his parents? . . . How must you then honour the master and how the priest? . . . Again, you must love them. You must be careful not to vex or displease them. You must be very respectful to the priest, and when your master gives you a task to do, you must do it cheerfully and diligently.

In order that you may love, honour and obey, more especially, your parents, the Catechism points out to you what a great reward you will gain by doing so.

146. What may children hope for, if they faithfully keep the Fourth Commandment?

God's blessing and protection in this life, and eternal happiness in the world to come.

What children *faithfully* keep the *fourth commandment*? (Those who love, honour and obey their parents and other superiors.) And these children may expect, i. e. may safely hope, to obtain *in this life* (i. e. so long as they are on this Earth) *God's blessing and protection*

(God will protect them from evil, from misfortune and will bless them and bestow many benefits upon them), and *in the other* life (i. e. when they are dead) *eternal happiness*. God Himself promised this: for in the fourth commandment, after saying, "honour thy father and thy mother", He adds, "that thy days may be long in the land etc.", that is, if you honour your father and mother, all will go well with you, and you will live a long life. How God blesses children who love, honour and obey their parents, may be seen in the history of the holy youth Tobias. (The Catechist might let the children relate, or relate to them the story of Tobias, and point out how God protected Tobias from harm, and how He heaped blessings upon him.) But, on the other hand, God punishes children who do not honour their parents. (Relate the history of Absalom's crime and punishment, and mention how his grave is still an object of horror.)

Therefore, dear children, love, honour and obey your parents. How many blessings have you not received from them! How much trouble and care have they not already had for you! How grateful you ought to be to them, and how much you ought to try to give them pleasure by your love and obedience etc.! A short time ago, I read about a young girl who went out to service with strangers when she was only thirteen years old, in order to be able to assist her parents. The first year she sent them all she could possibly spare, and wrote to them, saying how she wished she could send them more, and begging them to accept this little offering as a token of her gratitude, adding that she could never in her whole life sufficiently thank them for all their care of her. Well, children, you cannot send your parents any money yet, but you can give them pleasure by your prompt obedience, and you can pray for them. Jesus was the Son of God, and yet He (as you have learnt)

was obedient, subject unto His parents (Quest. 68 and 69). So, then, if you wish to be like the Child Jesus, and to please Him and one day to go to be with Him in Heaven, you must obey your parents promptly and cheerfully.

147. What does God forbid in the Fifth Commandment?

He forbids 1. murder and everything which leads to it, such as anger, hatred, quarrelling and fighting.

2. He forbids us to injure our own life or to lead others into sin.

1. In the fifth commandment God forbids: *murder*, that is, we may not kill anybody (as Cain did), not take anybody's life. Further, God forbids *everything which leads to it* (to murder), that is, everything which makes people kill one another. Now, what is that? What was it, for instance, that made Cain kill his brother Abel? It was jealousy. Because he was jealous of Abel, he could no longer bear him, could no longer show him a friendly countenance, hated him (like Joseph's brothers). This was *hatred*, and that is forbidden in the fifth commandment. When do you hate anybody? When you can no longer bear the sight of him, cannot give him a friendly word, and wish him evil. This is a sin.

Again: A short time ago, a man was murdered in a public house. Now, how did that happen? What led to it? It was fighting, the two men were *fighting*. And why? They had previously *quarrelled*. The one had said insulting, abusive words to the other. And how did the quarrel begin? The one man *got into a passion* about some ill-chosen jest, that is, he became very *angry* and broke out into a fury, and flew at the other with rough insulting words.

Now, all this is forbidden in the fifth commandment: *anger*; you must not get out of temper, scream with passion etc.; *quarrelling*; you must not upbraid, abuse, insult anyone, call anyone bad names, and so on; *fighting*; you must not fight, throw stones, brawl, and the like. But if anyone fights or ill-uses you, may you not fight and ill-use him again? No, by no means; I have already told you what you must do in that case (Quest. 126 and 127).

Nobody likes a wild, passionate child. Little Matilda was very passionate. Often, when things did not go on as she wished, she would become quite violent. She would cry with passion, and her face would be quite disfigured. One day, when she was in a violent passion, her mother took down a looking-glass from the wall quickly and held it before the passionate child. Then, Matilda saw how horrible her face was, and how ugly passion makes people look; and she was ashamed of herself and resolved to try earnestly to overcome her passionate temper. Have you ever seen anybody in a violent passion? . . . Was it not an ugly sight? . . . Well then, the *soul* of a passionate man would be a far worse sight than even his disfigured countenance. O children! If you have ever been in a great passion, and anyone could then have shown you in a glass how hateful your soul looked, how shocked you would have been! Do you wish to be thus hateful in the sight of God? No; well then, if anything does not go on as you wish, or if anyone offends you, and you feel your temper rising, check it immediately, and say: 'Dearest Jesus, Thou didst patiently suffer so much for me, I will now patiently bear this for the love of Thee.' And Jesus will help you to overcome your temptation to anger.

But there is still another thing I must warn you of which leads men to the crime of murder. Some time

ago, a man was put to death who had murdered several of his fellow-creatures. Do you know what brought him to that? It was a habit of cruelty. When he was a little boy, he took delight in *tormenting animals*, later on, he tormented other children, thus he became more and more cruel until at last he murdered his fellow-creatures. God gave the animals to us for our use, and they are of great assistance to us. (Examples.) Therefore, we ought to help them, and never beat them unnecessarily, or ill-use them, still less must we torment animals for amusement, for instance, pull off the wings of flies, or torture poor cats. A wicked boy once tormented an animal by pulling its ears and its hair, when, all at once, two powerful hands seized hold of him by his ears and his hair, and shook him heartily. The boy screamed and cried.—‘Does that hurt you, you little rascal?’ asked the man who shook him. ‘Well, that is just how you hurt the poor animal; now, go away and remember for the future, never to torment an animal for amusement, for it can feel pain as well as you can.’

2. God forbids us in the fifth commandment to *injure our own life*, that is, to do anything to injure our health which may be the cause of our dying the sooner. How could a child endanger his life? By drinking cold water when he has been running very fast and is very hot; also by being too venturesome in climbing trees, where he might easily fall down and injure himself very much. Also when he eats to excess. What may you not do then? . . .

Lastly, God forbids us in the fifth commandment to *lead others into sin*. Thus the serpent led Eve into sin, how? . . . Eve led Adam into sin, how? . . . A child does the same when he says to other children: ‘Come and let us steal some apples, or sugar’, or when he says: ‘Take some money from your home that you may go

with us for a donkey-ride' etc., or when he says: 'Don't obey, don't go home at the time your father told you, let us play a little longer'; or when he incites others to anger, to swearing etc., when he says bad immodest words before others, or commits any abominable actions before others, teaches them wicked things etc., when he swears before others so that they do the same—imitate him etc. These sins are called sins of *scandal*; he who leads another into evil, commits this sin of scandal; why? Because he is the cause of the other being more sinful than he was before.

148. Why is leading others into sin also against the Fifth Commandment?

Because leading others into sin injures our neighbour's soul more than murder injures his body.

You have said that leading others into sin is forbidden in the fifth commandment, yet, the fifth commandment only says: "Thou shalt not kill". But see, he who kills another, *injures him in his body*, is the cause of the life going out from the body, of its being buried in the ground, and of its going to corruption in the Earth. But, he who leads a man into sin (mortal sin), *injures him much more*; he injures him in his soul, causes his soul to lose its life, i. e. to lose the grace and the love of God, and to become hateful and abominable in the sight of God, and (if the man thus led away die in his sin) of its being buried in hell. Which is the greater injury then? . . . Which is worth the most, the body or the soul? . . . When anyone is killed, he suffers pain, it is true, but, it is soon over, and if only he has been good, his soul will go to Heaven, and his body will rise again gloriously. But, when anyone is led into any (mortal) sin, he will go (unless he repent) to hell, where he will suffer frightful torments which will never end,

will last for ever. Dear children! never, on any account, be the cause of other children committing sin, for you would then be doing the devil's work, you would be helpers of the devil. Imagine if you were to be the cause of anyone going to hell! Think if, at the last judgment, a child were to accuse you before God, saying: 'It is through that child that I am in hell, it was he who led me into sin, Most Just God, Thou must condemn that child also who was the cause of my ruin'. So then, children, be very careful never to tempt any child to commit sin (to steal, to curse, to be immodest). And if any other child wishes to tempt you to sin, go away from him at once, and say to yourself: 'This child is helping the devil, I will have nothing to do with him', and then, pray to God thus: 'Dear Lord! help me that I may not commit sin' (Quest. 49).

149. What does God forbid in the Sixth Commandment?

He forbids everything which is contrary to holy purity — everything which is against decency and modesty.

When is a child modest? A child is modest when he does not think, say, or do anything which he would be ashamed for others to know of (or, more correctly speaking, when he would be ashamed to do such things). So, good children will always be careful to avoid all immodest conversations, and will never be guilty of any indecency. God has arranged so that you can easily tell whether anything is immodest or not. When anything would make you blush, would make you feel very much ashamed if your father or mother or even any good children were to notice it (suppose you were obliged to confess to them: 'I have thought, said, or done, so and so'), then, it is generally something immodest. Therefore, you need only just ask yourselves (if you are in doubt

whether anything is immodest or not): Should I be ashamed if my parents were to know it? And when you are obliged to say: Yes, I should be ashamed, then, you must not do it, or, at least, ask your parents or your confessor (if you already go to confession), for instance, say: 'Father, there is something that I do not know whether it is immodest or not.' Remember when anything makes you blush it is as if God said to you: Take care, my child, do not do it, it may be wicked.

When a child is modest and pure, his soul is like a lovely garden where flowers, roses, pinks etc. are blooming.

Almighty God Himself takes pleasure in a child who is pure; all good people love him, and his guardian angel loves him, and takes care of him; the Most Pure Virgin Mary is a tender mother to him, and when he dies, he will receive in Heaven, besides the other heavenly joys, a most beautiful crown. (Relate the example of the patriarch Joseph, and of St. Aloysius.) On the other hand, the soul of an impure child is like a garden which has been all trodden down and laid waste by swine. His guardian angel turns away his eyes from him sadly, and God and the Blessed Virgin Mary can only look upon him with horror. When a child has been secretly guilty of impurity and nobody knows of it, he must be always afraid that it will be found out, and that he will then be frightfully ashamed. And even if it should never be found out in this life, it is certain to be made known to all the world in the last judgment, and how terribly ashamed he will then feel before his parents, his brothers and sisters, teachers, companions etc., when they know all his sins and they say: O, what a horrible child! God often punishes impure children in this world, through sickness, and after death he will be certain to punish them severely in hell. For God hates these sins

more especially, and He has always punished them with the greatest severity (Ham, the deluge, Sodom). Therefore, dear children, flee from these hateful sins. A poisonous serpent often looks very beautiful, is of a bright green and red colour, and shines and sparkles and looks very pretty, but it wounds with its poisonous bite those who approach it, and anyone so wounded will die. So also many children take pleasure in things that are immodest and impure; but the pleasure lasts but a little while, and the soul dies and must suffer eternal punishment. Dear children, would you not be horrified, and run away if you were to see a poisonous serpent? Have the same horror, then, when you see anything impure, and run away quickly from children who say or do such things, and be sure you tell your parents or your confessor. When any impure words were spoken in the presence of St. Stanislas, he felt such a horror of them that he fell down senseless to the ground. So should you also have a horror of such words, and run away quickly from children who say such things.

Be always very modest in dressing and in undressing, and especially in bathing even when you are quite alone. Remember that you are always in the presence of God and of your guardian angel.

Think of this when you are tempted to do anything wicked, and say like the patriarch Joseph: 'How can I commit this wicked action in the sight of the Lord?'

Lastly pray very fervently that God may keep you pure and innocent; pray especially to the Blessed Virgin, to your guardian angel and to St. Aloysius.

150. What are we forbidden by the Seventh Commandment?

We are forbidden to steal or to do any injury to the property of our neighbour.

By the seventh commandment we are forbidden to *steal*. Now, he who steals, he who takes anything away from another secretly, for instance, a child takes other children's pencils, pens, books etc., takes his parents or other people's fruit, sugar, money etc., such a child steals, is a thief.

Further, we are forbidden to *injure our neighbour* (everybody is our neighbour. Quest. 126) in his property, that is, to do anything to cause him to suffer any loss in his property or his goods. Mention some such to me: House, garden, fields, meadows, trees, animals, clothes, books etc. How could you injure your neighbour in his house, his garden, his field etc.? (Breaking windows, spoiling fruit, letting cattle that you had the care of, wander into other people's fields and meadows, cutting down little trees, or pulling off the bark of trees, or by knocking the fruit off trees, killing other people's cattle, tearing or spoiling clothes, books etc.) all this is forbidden by the seventh commandment.

You can also be guilty of theft and injury to your neighbour in another way: You are going to school and you see a pretty knife lying on the road; you pick it up quickly, put it in your pocket and keep it. Is that right? . . . Why not? . . . What should you do if you know to whom it belongs? . . . And what if you do not know whose it is? (Ask, or take it to the master.) Or, a child has lent you a book and has forgotten it, and you keep the book, do not give it back etc.

He who has taken anything from another, must give it back to him again, and whoever has done any injury to another, must make good the injury, for instance, he must give him as much money as the book was worth which he has spoilt etc. When anyone no longer has the thing which he took and has no money, he must say in confession (where indeed all these sins must be

confessed): 'Father, I took or I spoilt such and such a thing, and I have no money to replace it, or to make good the damage done; what must I do?'

You can easily understand all this (Quest. 128). If you had anything (a book etc.), would you like anyone to take it away from you or to spoil it? . . . If anyone had taken anything away from you, what would you wish him to do then? . . .

I warn you especially, dear children, against two things which concern the seventh commandment: Be on your guard against pilfering nice things, and do not begin by taking trifles belonging to others. A child who pilfers, who secretly takes eatables belonging to his parents, is even, now, a little thief, and he will steal other things, later on. I will tell you how greedy, pilfering children are very often punished: Margaret who, although she was a good child in other respects, had one fault, she was very fond of pilfering nice things. Once, when she was alone in the room, she saw the key in the cupboard-door, and immediately she unlocked it, and looked in to see if there was anything nice there. As it happened, she found a paper with some sweet white powder in it which she thought was powdered sugar; she ate it greedily and, then, locked the cupboard up again. About two hours afterwards, she felt terrible pain, and then, it came out that what she had eaten was rat-poison. The doctor was sent for immediately, but it was too late: Margaret died in the most frightful agony¹. So, dear children, never go into places where you may be tempted to pilfer, do not go too near the sugar-basin

¹ Similar stories are told of a boy who caught up some very hot cooked pears from off a dish, quickly devoured one outside the door, and fell down dead, and of the girl who put her finger into what she supposed to be a honey-jar, but which contained live crabs, and she was most unmercifully pinched by a crab.

etc., and when you feel tempted to take anything nice, say like that good little Anna whom I told you about, some time ago (Quest. 15): 'God is everywhere, and sees and knows all things.'

Again, beware of stealing trifles. People begin by taking little things and go on to bigger things. Many a child has begun by taking pencils, needles, and so on; and then, gone on to taking penknives, coppers, sixpences, and at length gold pieces, and has at last been put into prison where thieves and other people who have committed great crimes are punished, or died on the gallows. So be very careful never to take anything which belongs to others, or you will come to a bad end. You will become a thief, and will be punished as a thief in this world, and in the world to come.

151. What does God forbid by the Eighth Commandment?

He forbids all lies, bearing false witness, and speaking injuriously of our neighbour.

The eighth commandment says: Thou shalt not bear false witness, that is, thou shalt not testify to anything which is false (Quest. 142). Thou shalt not say: 'This or that is true', when it is not true; or 'This and that is not true', when it is true. (Examples.) If you were to do that you would be telling a lie. Now, who *tells lies*? He who knowingly says something which is not true. For instance, you have been kept in at school. Well, your father asks you where you have been so long? And you say: I have had to fetch something for my aunt. Now, what will you have done? . . . Why? . . . Peter tells you Philip is ill, and you believe him, and tell the same to others, but it is not true, and Philip is very well. Have you told a lie? . . . Have you not said something which was not true? . . . Then, why is it not a lie? . . . May we never tell a lie? . . . Suppose

for instance, you have broken a glass and you cannot do anything to make good the damage, and yet, if you acknowledge it, you will be beaten. May you not tell a lie, and say the cat has broken it? No, for God has forbidden all lies; lies offend Him; and we must rather suffer a beating, rather suffer anything than offend God (Quest. 124). Do you know who first told a lie and brought lying into the world? The devil. (Relate the story out of the Bible History.) So he who tells lies, imitates whom? . . . Do you wish to do that? . . . A child who tells lies is disliked by all good people; he is sure to bring shame upon himself, and may go so far that no one will believe what he says, even when he speaks the truth¹. A liar is the servant of sin; that is, he serves sin, he tells new lies to conceal his old lies or his other sins.

What must a child do, then, who has got into the habit of telling lies? He should persevere for some time in praying to God every morning thus: 'Dearest Lord! for the love of Thee, I will be very careful not to tell any lies to-day'; and if he notices that he has again told a lie, he should say: 'Dear Lord! forgive me, I will never do it again', and then say an 'Our Father' as a penance. But there are some children who are guilty of lying without, however, speaking a word. For instance, Joseph puts up his hands at prayers in school or in church as if he were very devout, instead of which he is not praying at all, but is thinking of other things. Or Albert is very naughty and is talking and playing, but, when the master looks at him, he pretends to be reading or listening very attentively.

¹ Here may be told the well-known tale of the shepherd-boy who, to tease the farmers, repeatedly cried out: 'The wolf is coming', and when the wolf did really come, and he cried out for help, nobody believed him, so he was torn in pieces by the wolf.

Now, see, Joseph, by holding up his hands, has done the same as if he had said to people: 'I am praying', and yet, he was not praying; Albert has done the same as if he said to the master: 'Only see how attentive I am!' and yet, he was not attentive at all. When a child tries to appear better than he is, he is guilty of what is called *hypocrisy*. God hates this sin, and will one day put such a child to shame before all people and all angels.

Again, the eighth commandment forbids us to spread a false report about our neighbour, that is, say something bad of him, behind his back, which is not true. That was what Potiphar's wife did when she told her husband and other people that Joseph wanted her to commit sin. Children also commit this sin when they do anything wrong, and then, throw the blame on an innocent person; for instance, Andrew has picked some fruit in a garden, and now, he says his little sister did it. This sin is particularly hateful, and any child who is guilty of it deserves to be severely punished.

Again, the eighth commandment forbids us to repeat anything about our neighbour which would cause him dishonour or disgrace if others knew of it. Little Peter stole something, and his father saw him and punished him severely for it; his brother Joseph knew it, and spoke of it to other children who did not know anything about it. He said: 'Peter stole something yesterday and got a beating.' Now, what had Joseph done? . . . What had he said about Peter? . . . Why was that injurious to Peter? . . . Was it not true, then, that Peter had stolen? . . . Then, may we not tell the truth? . . . Think, if you had stolen anything and only Paul knew of it, would you think it right if Paul told other children about it? . . . What does the Catechism teach us about the love of our neighbour? 'Do unto others as you would

be done unto,' or 'Never do to others what you would not like others to do to you.' So, you must never talk about the faults of others; you must not tell others that such a child was punished at school, because he was naughty etc.

But did not the good Joseph (the patriarch Joseph) once tell his father of something wicked which his brothers had done? Was not that a sin against the eighth commandment? No, when your brothers or sisters or servants do anything wrong, then, you *ought* to tell your parents that they may not do it again (not talk about it out of malice, or take pleasure in their being punished). When a child has done anything bad, or wants to lead you or other children into sin, then, you must tell me or your parents of it. It is no sin in that case, but a duty, and you please God by doing so.

152. What does God forbid in the Ninth Commandment?

He forbids all voluntary thoughts and desires contrary to holy purity.

This answer means: We must not think or desire voluntarily anything that is impure. We must not, therefore, think of filthy, immodest things (reference to Quest. 149) and not picture such things to ourselves as if we were seeing them, and we must not desire to see them etc. But, if it should happen that you were obliged to hear impure words, and you could not help yourself, and you went away at once, but the bad things you had heard said kept coming back into your mind again; you did not wish to know anything about them, but nevertheless they came into your mind—see, you have been thinking of impure things; have you then sinned against the ninth commandment? No. Why not? Because it was not by your own *free will* that you thought of them. You did not wish to do so; these thoughts were

not voluntary, not wilful. When a child thinks willingly of these things, or desires them, then, these thoughts and desires are voluntary and sinful; but when, as soon as he notices it, he thinks: 'I will not do it', and immediately thinks of something else, then, such thoughts are not wilful and there is no sin. Therefore, dear children, when anything bad comes into your mind, you must immediately think: 'I will not consent to it,' and banish it from your mind, or again, you might say in your heart: 'Dear Jesus (or Holy Mary), help me that I may keep pure and innocent.' Be careful to do this, for a child who consents to impure thoughts is not innocent in the sight of God; but impure, and God abominates him. And although people may know nothing about these thoughts, yet God knows them and will one day make them known before all the world and all the angels. Therefore, continue to be always pure-minded, innocent children. If a school-fellow spoils a book of yours, and then gives you as much money as it was worth, he restores the book, for it is just the same to you as if it had never been spoilt. But if you lose your innocence (through bad thoughts, desires, and so forth), can anyone restore that to you, give you anything of the same value? No, nothing is of so great a value as innocence, and nothing can make you innocent again as you were before. So, resolve never to lose your innocence, never to consent to the least bad thought, but banish it immediately from your mind.

153. What does God forbid in the Tenth Commandment?

He forbids all unlawful desires for the goods that belong to our neighbour.

We must not, therefore, willingly, voluntarily (see the previous Question) desire *unjust goods*, that is, we must not wish to obtain by unjust means things which

do not belong to us. But, mark, children, that which you may not do, you are also forbidden to *wish* to do. Would it be right, for example, if you thought: 'O, if I could only take some of those apples when nobody was looking?' . . . Why would not this be right? . . . Might you take them? . . . A child who would like to steal if nobody was looking, is in his heart and in the sight of God a thief already. But, if you see that your neighbour has a pretty pen-holder, and you think: 'How I should like one like that, how I wish my father would buy me one!' or, 'I wish that boy would make me a present of his pen-holder!' is that a sin? . . . Why not? . . .

But, although such thoughts are not sinful, yet they are useless and are the cause of sinful thoughts coming. For instance, to a child who is often thinking: 'If I only had a pretty picture-book like Mary's!' the temptation easily comes to think: 'If I could only take it away from her!' Therefore, be content with what God has given you, and when discontented thoughts come to you, and you would like to have what richer children have, then think: 'I will be contented; Our dear Lord was also poor, and if only I am good, God will love me and take me to Heaven, one day, where I shall be rich enough, and have everything my heart can desire.'

OF THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE CHURCH.

154. Are there, besides the Commandments of God, any others which Christians are bound to keep?

Yes, the Six Commandments of the Church.

In order to save our souls, to obtain Heaven, we must keep the commandments which God gave us (Quest. 119). Some of the commandments, God gave to us Himself; we have been speaking about them up to the present; but, there are other commandments which it is God's Will

that we should keep also, and these He did not give to us Himself, but made them known to us through the Catholic Church. Just as it is your father's will that you should obey not only all what he himself tells you; but also all that he causes you to be told by your elder brothers or sisters, or by the servant (Quest. 111).

155. Who gives us the Commandments of the Church?

The rulers of the Catholic Church.

The Church gives the commandments. You belong to the Church, can you give commandments too? . . . Who has the right to command in your house? . . . Why? . . . Who has the right to command in the Church? . . . (Recapitulation of what has been said in Quest. 110 and 111.)

156. From whom did the rulers of the Church receive the power to give Commandments?

From Jesus Christ Himself.

When can the servant say to you: 'Do that, or you will be punished?' When your father has given her *the power* to do it, has said to her: 'You must tell the children what they are to do, and if they do not obey you, they will be punished.' When can the Pope and the bishops say to Catholics: 'You must keep this or that precept, or you will not go to Heaven?' When God, when Jesus Christ has given them *the power*, has said to them: 'You must command Christians to do what is necessary for the salvation of their souls; and if they do not obey you, they shall be punished and not enter Heaven.' Has Jesus, then, spoken thus to the Pope and the bishops? Yes, for He said to the apostles who were the first bishops: "'He who heareth you, heareth me' (Explanation at Quest. 111). 'He who will not hear the Church, let him be unto you as a heathen and a publican;'"

and to Peter, the first Pope: "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep" (Explanation at Quest. 110). So, he who breaks a commandment of the Church disobeys whom? . . . and with what punishment is he threatened? . . .

157. What are the Six Commandments of the Church?

1. To hear Mass with devotion, and to rest from servile work on Sundays, and Holydays of obligation.

2. To keep the Days of Fasting and Abstinence appointed by the Church.

3. To confess our sins at least once a year.

4. To receive Holy Communion at Easter, or thereabouts.

5. To contribute to the support of our Pastors.

6. Not to marry, within certain degrees of kindred, nor privately without witnesses, nor to solemnize marriage at certain prohibited times.

What is *the first* commandment of the Church? . . . What days are we to keep holy? Sundays and Holydays, that is, days appointed by the Church to be kept as Feastdays, days, on which we are to rejoice and to rest from servile work just the same as we do on Sundays (Quest. 144). What may we not do on these days? . . . What must we do? . . .

Who can mention the names of some of these Holydays? We have already had several (Quest. 59. 86. 88. 108). What are we reminded of by the Feast of Christmas? . . . Easter? . . . Ascension? . . . Pentecost? . . . These are all Feasts of Our Lord. But we have also Feasts of the saints, days on which we think of the saints, and honour them and invoke them. Whom do we honour the most of all the saints? . . . Do you know any Feast of Our

Lady? (For example, the Purification, see Quest. 66.) And do you know any Feast of any other saint? ¹

Is it not better to go to Mass also on week-days? Certainly, but it is not obligatory. If you do not go to Mass on a Sunday you commit a sin; but, if you do not go on week-days, that is not a sin for you (except when your parents or superiors have ordered you to go).—We are commanded to hear Mass with *devotion*, that means, we must think during the Mass of what is going on at the altar, of God, of prayer, and not of play, or of lessons, and so on.

With regard to the *second* commandment of the Church, Fastdays are days when we must eat less than usual, when we may only take one full meal and that not before mid-day. (In the evening, we may only eat a very little.) *To keep the appointed Fastdays*, means, therefore, that we may only eat one full meal on the days when the Church commands us to fast. We are also to keep the *Abstinence days*, that is, we must make a difference in the food we eat; on some days we may eat any sort of food, on other days we may not; or, we may not eat meat on the days when the Church has forbidden it.

The *third* commandment of the Church says we are *to confess our sins at least once a year; at least once*, that is, we may go to confession and communion oftener, and it is very good to do so; but we must not go less than once a year; so, to stay away from the sacraments for more than one year is forbidden.

The *fourth* commandment of the Church says we are *to receive Holy Communion at Easter, or thereabouts*, that is, within the time allowed for Easter-duties.

¹ The Catechist would do well to draw the children's attention, in the religious instruction, to the meaning of each of the principal Feasts as they come round.

The *fifth* commandment of the Church orders us *to contribute to the support of our Pastors*, that is, we must give, according to our means, as much as we can afford, towards the support of the priest and the expenses of the Church.

The *sixth* commandment of the Church does not concern children.

Now, are you, children, already obliged to keep the commandments of the Church? The first commandment, you are certainly obliged to keep, just as I told you you were obliged to keep the Sundays holy. The sixth commandment, as I have just said, does not concern you at present. As regards the second, third, fourth and fifth commandment of the Church, the Catechism teaches you what you already have to observe.

158. Are children obliged to hear Mass and to fast?

Children who have attained the full use of reason, are obliged to hear Mass devoutly on Sundays and Holydays. And also to keep the Days of Abstinence, appointed by the Church; but they are not obliged to fast.

Do you remember what children have attained the full use of reason? (Quest. 136.) You all have the full use of reason and are, therefore, obliged:

First *to hear Mass on Sunday and Holydays devoutly*, i. e. with devotion (see the previous Quest.). What children break this commandment, sin against it? 1. Those who do not go to Mass on Sundays and Holydays when they are able, through idleness, carelessness etc. (When your parents will not let you go, because you are not well, or because it is too far to the church, or the weather is too bad, then, it is no sin for you to stay away.) 2. Children who come too late by their own

fault, when the Mass is already begun, (because, through idleness, they get up too late, or play on the way etc.), or go out too soon before the Mass is ended; for we must hear the *whole* of one Mass. 3. Those commit a sin who do not hear Mass devoutly, who play during Mass, and laugh and look about them, and do not pray, think voluntarily (Quest. 152) of other things, such as playing, eating, and the like. I will teach you, later on, what you must do to hear Mass devoutly; only mark well: You must not talk, or play, or look about, but take your little prayer-book, and say the prayers that are in it, or say your Rosary.

I especially warn you, dear children, of one sin against this commandment of the Church, that those children commit who, instead of going to Mass, go into the woods etc., to play. That is a great sin. Three merchants were once travelling together, and they were in a great hurry to get home, and so, two of them would not stay to hear Mass on the Sunday; and when the third one warned them against the sin of missing Mass, they said: 'What does that matter, we can go to church another time.' So, they rode off very fast, but God punished them; for just as they were crossing over a rapid stream, the bridge gave way, and they were both drowned. The third merchant, however, who did not continue his journey until after hearing Mass, arrived safely home. Why did God punish these two men? . . . What do you learn from that?

Again, you are obliged to abstain from meat on the days appointed, that is, on days when we are forbidden by the Church to eat meat, bacon, or any food that has meat in it, for instance, sausages, meat-soup etc. You children are not yet obliged to fast, but you must abstain from flesh-meat every Friday in the year, except when Christmas-Day happens to fall on a Friday, for, in that case, meat is allowed. In England also

during the whole period of Lent (Sundays included), except in so far as the bishop gives leave to eat meat.—And on the Wednesdays and Saturdays of the Ember-week—the Wednesdays in Advent—the Eve of Christmas-day—of Whitsunday—of Saints Peter and Paul—of the Assumption of the B. V. Mary—and of All Saints.

The Church commands us to abstain from flesh-meat on certain days for various reasons. I will tell you one reason: that we may punish ourselves, do penance for our sins (as parents punish a child who has been naughty by not giving it any nice food). And why is it particularly on a Friday that we are to eat no meat? What ought we to remind ourselves of on a Friday? . . . And why did Jesus die? For our sins; therefore, we ought to think of our sins more especially on a Friday, and do penance for them by eating no meat. When you would like very much to have some meat on a Friday, then think: 'No, the Church has forbidden it, I will obey, for the love of Our Blessed Lord. I will eat nothing that is forbidden that He may pardon me my sins.'

Again, you might also please Our dear Lord very much in this way; for instance, when there is anything very nice on the table which you like very much, and you have had some of it, and would like to have some more, you say to yourself: 'For the love of my dear Saviour, I will eat no more of it; He suffered hunger, for my sake.' Or you are thirsty and long very much to drink some water; and you wait a few minutes and say to yourself: 'Our dear Lord suffered thirst on the cross for me, so I will also, for the love of Him, suffer thirst for a little while.' In this way you could often show Our Lord that you love Him, and then, He will most certainly love you still more¹.

¹ It will be useful to make the children clearly understand that,

159. When are children obliged to go to Confession and Communion?

As soon as they are sufficiently instructed and prepared, and this must be left to the decision of the priest.

You have been taught that all Catholics are obliged to go to confession and communion at least once a year; are you also obliged to do that? When ought a child to make his first confession or communion? *As soon as he is sufficiently instructed*; that is, as soon as he has learnt as much in the instruction as is necessary for him to make a good confession or communion, and as soon as he is *sufficiently prepared*. When are you prepared for a school-examination? When you know all that is necessary for you to know for that purpose. So also a child is sufficiently prepared for confession and communion when he knows all that is necessary, and has the necessary dispositions for making a good confession and communion, such as piety, contrition etc. Who can decide whether you are sufficiently instructed and prepared? The *priest*, for God has given him the care of your soul that you may know God, that you may be cleansed from your sins, and that you may attain eternal salvation; the priest who instructs you in the faith, must decide which children are prepared and may go to confession, to communion; and which children may not go yet.

Dear children, to be allowed to go to confession and communion is a great happiness. Our dear Lord gives great graces and many rich blessings to the souls of

in such cases, they will not commit a sin by eating more, or by drinking at once (as long as they do not go beyond the bounds of temperance, or injure their health); only in that case, they will have missed an opportunity of specially pleasing Our Lord.

those children who make a good confession and communion. If, therefore, you wish for this great happiness, you must do two things: 1. Pay great attention to the instruction, learn very diligently, especially during the instruction on confession which I am soon going to begin with you. 2. You must also be very pious, obedient and good, for I cannot permit this happiness to idle, unruly, disobedient, and naughty children. The more diligent and pious you are, the sooner you will be allowed to go to confession (and later, on, to holy communion).

ON BREAKING THE COMMANDMENTS.

Up to the present, you have heard what commandments God has given, and you know, if we faithfully keep them, we are good and obedient children of God, and God will take us to Himself in Heaven. But, how will it be if we do *not* keep God's commandments? What will happen to us then? I will now explain that to you more fully.

160. What does he commit who voluntarily breaks one of the Commandments of God or of the Church?

He commits a sin.

Who breaks God's commandments? If you were going through fields or gardens, and I were to say to you: 'You must keep in the foot-path', and you were to step out of the path either to the right or to the left, or on to the grass or the flower-beds, then, you would have left the right path; would have acted contrary to my commands. In the same way, God has, as it were, pointed out to us a path to Heaven, through His commandments. He has said: 'Thou shalt go this way, not that'; 'Thou shalt do this, not that.' (Examples.) Therefore, he who does otherwise than what God has said, steps, as it were, out of the way (to Heaven), does

something, therefore, that God has forbidden, or does not do something which God has commanded, commits a sin. (Example Adam and Eve, Quest. 49.)

161. In how many ways can we commit sin?

We can commit sin

1. through bad thoughts, desires, words, and actions,

2. by omitting good works.

You can, therefore, *commit sin*, that is, break God's commandments:

1. by thinking (longing for, Quest. 152), by desiring, by saying, or doing anything wicked, namely, which God has forbidden. For instance, if you think of something impure, then you sin against what commandment? In what? In thought. When you think: 'I wish I could give that child a good beating', then you sin against what commandment? In what? When you curse or swear? When you secretly take money etc.? Then you sin against what commandments? In what? (Also inversely, how do you sin against the fourth commandment in deed? How against the sixth in word etc.?)

2. You can commit sin even when you do not think, desire, say or do anything wicked. For instance, you do not do your work which your parents have commanded you to do. Have you done anything then? No, on the contrary, you have *omitted* doing what you ought to have done, you have left it undone. If you had done it, you would have done something good, something which God has commanded, which pleases Him. Well, you have left it undone; what have you, therefore, omitted? *Something good*. In what way have you sinned then? By omission.

Now listen: Anthony does not go to church on Sundays: he omits something good, commits a sin. Bertha does

not go to Mass on a week-day when she could easily do so; her parents and superiors have not commanded her to do so, they have left her the free choice; she has, therefore, omitted something good. Well now, has Bertha sinned? No, she has certainly missed an opportunity of pleasing God and of obtaining grace, but she has not sinned, because it is not a command either of God or of the Church that we should go to Mass on a week-day. Bertha has not broken a commandment, whereas Anthony *has* broken a commandment. You sin, therefore, by the omission of good only when the good you omit is commanded by God or by the Church.

You have just heard how people can commit sin. Now, there are various sins which men commit, for instance, they tell lies, they are not devout, they are immodest etc., are all these sins equal? Does the one offend God just as much as the other? Or as the Catechism asks:

162. Are all sins equally great?

No, there are grievous sins which are called *mortal* sins; and there are lesser sins which are called *venial* sins.

When are two children *equally tall*? When one is as tall as the other. Well, the Catechism asks: *Are all sins equally great*, that means: is one sin as great as another? No, there *are grievous* (great) *sins* and *there are lesser* (smaller, not so great) *sins*. The greater sins are called mortal sins. Why? You have heard people say 'So and so is mortally wounded', that means, he will die of that wound, it will cause his death. So also mortal sin causes the death of the soul¹.

¹ The application might be made here: How much you would fear a sickness which would cause you to lose your life, of which you must die! Still more should you fear and shun mortal sin, for

He who commits a mortal sin, dies—not in the body, for he can still eat, sleep and work, and will not be put in the grave; but in the soul; that is, his soul loses sanctifying grace, is worse than a dead body in the sight of God, God abhors it, and if the soul comes before God's judgment-seat like that (after death), God will cast it down into hell, into everlasting death (Quest. 118).

Smaller sins are called *venial sins*. *Venial* sins are sins which God pardons or remits more easily, God certainly pardons us also mortal sins when we sincerely repent of them, but only under the condition that we confess them and do penance for them; but he remits our venial sins if we only make a sincere act of contrition for them¹.

When does a child commit a mortal sin? When he thinks, or says, or does something very wicked quite knowingly and wilfully. There must, therefore, be two points to make a sin which a child commits a mortal sin: 1. it must be something very bad; 2. the child must do it quite knowingly and wilfully.

For instance, it would be something very bad indeed, if a child insulted or struck his parents; thought, or said, or did anything impure; some children say bad things about others which are not true; steal, or, through malice, spoil things which are worth a great deal etc. He, therefore, who does such things knowingly and wilfully, commits a mortal sin. When do you do anything wrong

that takes away the life of the soul and eternal life in Heaven which is certainly worth infinitely more than the life of the body, earthly life etc.

¹ This example might also be given: A child can offend his parents very much or only in trivial things; the latter the parents would forgive without difficulty, whereas greater offences they would forgive only if they saw that the child was very sorry for them, and then not without imposing some punishment.

knowingly and wilfully? When you know that it is very sinful that you ought not to do it, and yet you do it. For instance, your conscience tells you, you must not be immodest, and you could get away from bad companions, and yet you stay with them, and you are immodest etc. But think; a child has heard vulgar, impure words; but he does not know what they are, and he repeats them; then, that is no sin, because he did not wish or intend anything bad. If, however, he knew well that the words were not proper, but yet did not know that they were so very bad (otherwise he would not have said them), then, he has certainly said something very bad, but he has not committed a mortal sin, because he did not do it knowingly and wilfully, but only a venial sin¹.

When does a child commit a venial sin? 1. When he thinks, says, or does something which is not so very bad, for instance, happens to omit his prayers, or says them without devotion, tells little untruths, or steals a few apples etc. 2. When he thinks something very bad; but not knowingly and wilfully (see above).

You now know how to distinguish between a lesser and a greater sin. The Catechism now goes on to show you what are the principal sins from which all the others spring, what those sins are which we must take the most care to avoid.

163. Which are the Seven Capital Sins?

The Seven Capital Sins are: 1. Pride, 2. Covetousness, 3. Lust, 4. Envy, 5. Gluttony, 6. Anger, 7. Sloth.

¹ In the same way, very bad thoughts which we do not consent to, strive earnestly to overcome, are not sins; if we do not consent to them, but are not diligent enough in banishing them, we commit a venial sin; if we willingly think of them and take pleasure in

1. *Pride*. The Pharisee was *proud* who thought himself better than other men, and despised the Publican. A child is proud who thinks he is better than other children, because he has finer clothes, or knows more, or can do more etc. A child is proud who takes pleasure in standing before the looking-glass, who is always wishing for finer clothes than others have, who is fond of praising himself, says how clever he is, how well he knew his lessons etc., who despises other children, laughs at them, because they have worse clothes than he has, do not know so much etc. Our Blessed Lord and His most holy Mother were not like that. They wore only very simple clothing, they were willing to pass for poor simple people, and they loved the poor, the simple, and the lowly. Mary did not say: 'Behold, the Mother of God' etc.; but: 'Behold, the handmaid of the Lord.'

Jesus dislikes the proud. Proud children easily become envious, rough, quarrelsome, unchaste etc., and thus fall into many sins. Therefore, dear children, do not be puffed up with pride if you are better off and have better clothes than others, but think: 'Before God I am but a poor sinful child.' Be satisfied with the clothes you have, never laugh at or despise a child who is poorer, worse dressed, or not so clever as you; but think: 'In the sight of God this child is probably better than I am' etc.

2. *Covetousness*. Giezi was *covetous*, he had a great desire for money, clothes etc., and in order to obtain them he told a lie to Naaman; Judas who etc. (see Bible History). A child is covetous who is very fond of money, fond of hoarding it up, fond of counting his money over, never gives anything away; who keeps

them, although we know that it is a great sin, then, we commit a mortal sin.

everything he gets for himself, is never willing to share anything with his brothers and sisters or other children, never gives anything to the poor when he could do so, and is not pleased when his parents give to the poor etc.

Covetousness is hateful especially in children. Covetous children easily begin to steal, to tell lies, become hard-hearted etc. Never be like that, dear children! When you get any money, you may, of course, save it up (it would not be right if you were to give it away uselessly, or to spend it all in sweets); but you should not think too much about it, not be often counting it etc., but willingly give some of it away (with your parent's permission). When you have apples or sweets etc., you should be willing to share them with others (for you would certainly like that others should give you some of theirs). You should be willing to help others who are in need, for instance, have no paper, pencils, pens etc. If you give willingly to others, God will also give willingly to you; but if you will give nothing, then you deserve that God also should give you nothing.

3. *Lust*. Recapitulation of what has been said on the sixth and ninth commandment (Quest. 149 and 152).

4. *Envy*. Cain was *envious*, because God loved Abel better than him; Joseph's brethren were envious, because everything went well with him, because his father thought more of him. A child is envious when he does not like to see other children get on well, or is displeased when others are praised, or have better clothes on. A child is envious who rejoices when others get into trouble, fall down, are punished, and so on.

Do you know who was the first to be guilty of envy? The devil who was displeased that Adam and Eve were so happy, and so led them into sin that they might be driven out of Paradise. Whom, then, does an envious child resemble? . . . Again, what crime did envy cause

Cain to commit? What Joseph's brethren? Thus an envious child falls into many other sins: hatred, anger, strife, lying, unkind conversation about others etc. Therefore, children, as soon as ever you feel such envious thoughts coming into your mind, when, for instance, anyone else is praised, banish them at once, and think: 'If I am envious, I shall be like the devil,' or say: 'God be praised that this child is good, I will try to be good also so that we may go to Heaven together.' Or, if such envious thoughts trouble you very much, say a 'Hail Mary' for the child, and thus you will overcome this vile sin of envy.

5. *Gluttony*. Dives, the rich man, who ate too much, was intemperate in eating and drinking, was *guilty of gluttony*; Noah, also, who drank too much; Esau who was so greedy after his food. A child is guilty of gluttony, is intemperate when he eats or drinks too much, continues to eat after he has had enough; or a child who is always wanting to be eating between meals, without being hungry. A child who seizes hold of his food too greedily, who drinks immoderately when he is very hot etc. A child who is, as people say, dainty, and likes only very nice things, dainties, and so on, and is discontented with his food.

A greedy child soon gives way to pilfering and thieving (Quest. 150). A child who eats and drinks too much, is worse than the animals; for they leave off feeding when they have had enough. An intemperate child easily falls sick and often dies young. Be temperate, then, dear children! When you have had enough, leave off eating, even when there is something very nice, and you would like some more. Be contented with every kind of food, and often eat a little less than you wish for, and say to yourself: 'Our dear Lord had only vinegar and gall on the cross; I will, therefore, be satisfied and

not eat so much' (Quest. 158). Never drink much when you are hot; never drink beer and wine, or only when your parents wish to give it you, and then only a little. Brandy and whiskey or gin you should never drink, not even when grown-up people wish to give it you.

6. *Anger*. See the fifth commandment (Quest. 147).

7. *Sloth*. A child is *slothful* or idle when he does not like work, will not get up in the morning, does not like learning his lessons, neglects his tasks. A child is also slothful when he does not like to pray, to go to church etc.

A slothful child is displeasing to God and to all good people; such a child learns nothing properly, and later on, he will not be able to be put to anything useful, and will probably fall into poverty and sin. Therefore, dear children, carefully avoid these hateful faults; get up in the morning directly you awake. Imagine you see Jesus standing by your bed-side, calling you, and say: 'My Jesus, for the love of Thee I will get up'; and then jump out quickly. Learn your lessons diligently; begin them at once, do not put them off until the last moment. When it is time to say your prayers and you feel idle, say to yourself: 'My Jesus prayed for me and did so much for me, so I will pray now for the love of Him.'

These are, then, the seven capital sins. Why are they so called?

164. Why are they called Capital Sins?

Because all the other sins spring from them as from a main source.

The seven sins which I have just explained to you, are called *the seven capital* or *chief sins*. They are so called, because they are the first and the most important sins (see chief commandment, Quest. 120). Why are they the first and the most important? *Because all the other sins spring from them*, i. e., come out of them. Where

does the brook which flows through our village come from? It comes out of a spring or source. If there were no spring, there would be no brook. It is the same with sins as with the brook, they have also, as it were, their springs from whence they flow. The seven chief sins are, therefore, so many *chief springs*, that is, they are the seven principal sources from which other sins come (stealing, lying etc.). If these chief sins did not exist, the other sins would not exist either; for instance, why does a child steal, tell lies etc.? Because he is greedy, fond of nice things. From whence do his sins of theft and lying come? From the capital sin of covetousness or gluttony. Why is a child disobedient, why does he not learn his lessons, why does he not go to church, say his prayers etc.? Because he is idle. These sins come out of the capital sin of sloth.

Dear children, each one of you has one capital sin from which your other faults and sins come. If you wish to know which it is, then just think a little: 'What sins do I commit the most often? For what fault am I corrected, scolded, punished the most frequently? Why do I generally commit these faults? What leads me to do it?' And you must strive more especially against this fault, and when you ask God in the morning, to keep you from all sin during the day, think more especially of this sin and firmly resolve not to commit it during the whole day.

165. Should we fear and detest grievous sins only?

No, we should fear and detest every sin, whether great or small.

There are some people who fear mortal sin very much, but make very light of committing venial sin; they think: 'I shall not go to hell for that.' Are they right? They are quite right to fear mortal sin, but, they are wrong

not to fear venial sin. Would it not be foolish if a child were to say: 'What does it matter if I do fall on the ice and sprain my ankle? That will not kill me.' It is still more foolish when anyone thinks: 'What does it matter about a venial sin? I shall not go to hell for that' (Quest. 98). And certainly, he would not be a very good child who would think: 'If I only offend my parents a little, it is of no consequence, as long as I do not make them so angry that they will send me away from home.' And so also, he would not be a good child of Our Heavenly Father who would think: 'If I only offend God a little, it does not matter, as long as I do not offend Him so much that He will condemn me to hell.' Therefore, the Catechism says *we should fear every sin, whether it be great or small* (that is, fear, not only great sins, but also lesser ones). For instance, you are afraid of your neighbours great dog, you get out of his way, you do not trust yourself near him. Why? You think he might bite you, might do you harm. Now see, every sin you commit does you far more harm than that; therefore, you must fear every sin, and take care never to go where you may be led into sin.

The Catechism says, further, we must *detest* all sins, have a horror of them. If you were to see an ugly reptile, for instance, a toad, trying to crawl on your coat, you would detest it, perhaps scream out, shake off the animal and run away; you would, then, have a horror of the ugly reptile. Well now, every sin, even the smallest sin, is far more hateful and abominable in the sight of God than the most frightful reptile. So you must have a great horror of every sin, that is, loathe and detest it. If anything bad comes into your mind, or anyone wants to lead you into sin, banish it immediately, go away at once, and if the thought should come into your mind that it is only a venial sin after

all, then think: 'That is no matter, for every sin is hateful to God, and will be punished by Him. I will not then offend God even in the smallest thing.'

166. Why must we fear every sin so much?

Because sin is the greatest evil in the world; therefore, we must fear it more than any other evil.

Mention to me some evils which may happen to men: Hunger, cold, pain (tooth-ache etc.), sickness, death of parents etc. All these evils you *fear* (see the foregoing Quest.). But, do you fear them all equally? No; you certainly fear sickness more than having to suffer a little from hunger, the death of parents more than sickness. (You would rather suffer a little from hunger than be ill, rather be ill than lose your parents.) Why? Because sickness is a *greater evil* (misfortune, suffering) than hunger, the death of our parents is a greater evil than sickness. But now, which is the *greatest evil in the world* that can happen to you? Is it death? No; the greatest misfortune, the greatest evil is sin; it is something far worse, it makes men more unhappy than hunger, pain, sickness or death. (You will hear presently why it is so.) Now, because sin is a greater evil than all that, we must, *therefore*, fear it more. You must, then, rather suffer hunger than steal anything, rather be laughed at than go with wicked companions, rather be beaten, ah! even beaten to death, than commit an impure action (see the example of the holy martyrs Quest. 124). That was why the saintly queen Blanche frequently said to her son St. Louis whilst the latter was still a child: 'Dearest child, much as I love you, I would rather see you die at once than ever hear that you had fallen into sin.' And the little Louis had, from that time, so great a horror of sin that he feared it more than the most painful disease. And I also, dear children, although

you are very dear to me, yet if I knew that anyone of you would fall into mortal sin, I would pray God rather to let that child die at once. For, if you die without sin, you will go to Heaven and be happy for ever; but if you commit a mortal sin, you will be wretched and hateful children in the sight of God, and if you die thus, you will be eternally lost in hell. Therefore, children, suffer anything rather than ever commit sin (compare also Quest. 95).

Sin is, therefore, a very great evil, the greatest evil in the whole world. But why is it so?

167. Why is sin so great an evil?

Because sin is an offence against God, and it draws upon us the punishment of God.

Every sin is an *offence against God*; as often as you commit a sin, you offend God and incur His anger. Why? When you, for example, steal, or tell a lie, you know very well God has said: 'Thou shalt not steal—not lie;' yet you do it, you steal etc., although you know that God has forbidden it, and although you know that God sees you. Would it not offend your father if he had, for example, forbidden you to take something, and you did not ask, but took it before his eyes? So also God is offended when you do anything He has forbidden, when you commit sin. Since then every sin offends God, every sin must be a great evil. Would it not be very wicked of you if you were to offend your parents so much that they grieved and wept very bitterly on your account? Would you not rather submit to a severe beating? It would be still worse if you were to offend God, your good Heavenly Father who loves you so much, and bestows so many benefits on you every day of your life; if you were to offend your dear Saviour who suffered so much for you even when He was only a

little child, and who, at last, shed His blood for you in the midst of the most terrible torments; if your dear Saviour also were to weep over you and say: 'I have loved this child so much, and now, he causes Me so much grief.' Yes, children, that is why sin is so hateful and odious, and why a good child would far rather die than knowingly and deliberately commit a sin (especially a mortal sin).

But there is still another reason why sin is so great an evil: *It draws upon us the punishment of God*, that is, it causes God to punish us. If you offend your father by disobedience, he punishes you; so you take care not to be disobedient, because you fear the punishment. If you offend God, He also will punish you, and certainly God will punish you far more severely than your father would.

168. What kind of punishment does sin draw upon us?

Mortal sin draws upon us eternal punishment in hell, and venial sin draws upon us temporal punishment, either in this world or in purgatory.

He who commits a *mortal sin* (Quest. 162) will be punished for it *eternally*, that is, for ever, without any end, *in hell* (recapitulation from Quest. 95); whereas he who commits a *venial sin*, will be punished for it *temporarily*, that is, for a time, this punishment will last for a time, and then, be at an end; *in this world*, that is, he must as long as he is in this world, suffer punishment, for example, hunger, pain, sickness, or if he have not suffered sufficiently in this world, then, he will suffer for it *in purgatory* (recapitulation from Quest. 97 to 99).

You will understand best how mortal sin will be punished by thinking of the wicked angels (Quest. 38). They were so beautiful and so happy before they sinned, God loved them so much, and would have made them happy for ever in Heaven. But they committed one

single mortal sin, and they became so hateful, so abominable that it is impossible to express how horrible they are. God no longer loved them, but cast them out from His presence with horror, and, instead of heavenly joys, they now have to bear the fearful torments of hell which will last for ever, for all eternity. The same thing happens when a child who was previously good commits a mortal sin. Before that he had sanctifying grace (Quest. 108); his soul was so beautiful that God and all the holy angels rejoiced in him, God loved him very dearly, his heart was happy and joyful, and if he had died thus, he would have gone to the eternal delights and joys of Heaven. But he commits a mortal sin, and, in the same instant, loses sanctifying grace; then, all beauty is gone, and his soul is as vile and hateful in the sight of God as a dead body which has gone to corruption. God turns away His face from such a child with horror; he has no more joy, no more peace, and if he die in this sin, he must suffer the frightful torments of hell for ever, without any end, without the pain ever becoming less, without hope! O children! how fearful a thing mortal sin is, since the good God who is so loving and so merciful, punishes it so terribly! O be very careful then never to commit a mortal sin! Think if you were to die guilty of one mortal sin and to be damned for ever; to have to suffer the most frightful torments in the flames of hell, and were to think: 'I suffer this now on account of that (particular) mortal sin.' O how you would curse that sin and think: 'O, if I had not done that!' But it would be too late. Now, it is yet time; you can yet avoid going to hell by never committing a mortal sin. Therefore, make a good resolution, never, on any account, to commit a mortal sin! And pray sometimes to God thus: 'Dearest Lord, rather let me die at once than ever commit a mortal sin!'

But, be careful also to avoid venial sin, for that also will be severely punished. How many there are now perhaps who are sick and suffer great pain, on account of such little sins which they looked upon as nothing! And the souls in purgatory, what terrible pains they have to suffer for such venial sins! How many a child may be in purgatory now, doing severe penance, because he, for example, told lies, said his prayers without devotion, was disobedient etc.! He must think: 'O, if I had not done that, I should now be in Heaven with God!' If such a child could come back once more to this world, how careful he would be to avoid these sins! Avoid them, then, very carefully now that you may not one day have to go to purgatory, to suffer for them for a very long time. Think if the temptation comes to you, for example, to tell a lie, to pilfer, to say your prayers badly etc.: 'No, I will not offend God; I will be very careful now so that I may not have to suffer severely in purgatory.'

But, above all things, dear children, I repeat it once more, never commit a mortal sin! And if you feel tempted to do any bad action, for example, to steal, to be immodest etc., and are thus *drawn* towards sin, then shun that sin, flee from it! And how can you the most easily shun it? By picturing to yourself the pains of hell, that is, thinking as though you saw hell before you, and ask yourself: 'Am I willing to go there?' And think also: 'What use will all the good things in this world be to me if I now commit this bad action to which I feel inclined, for instance, to steal, to be immodest etc., if I must suffer for it, for ever and ever!' What good was it to the rich man that he had eaten of the best of food and worn fine clothes etc.? Think; when you die, what good will it then be to you to have had such and such a pleasure, such good clothes, such

sums of money etc.? All that will be gone by, like smoke; and then, will come the torments of hell! Short joys and long sufferings!—There was once a pious, holy man who lived all alone in the desert, and a wicked woman came to him and wanted to lead him into a great sin. The holy man was greatly tempted to this sin, and very nearly fell. Then, it appeared to him as though hell was on the right side of him, and as he happened to have lighted a fire just before, he stretched out his feet into the fire and suffered for a time the most terrible pain. The woman screamed loudly and said: ‘What are you doing?’ ‘O’, said the holy man, ‘I will show my wicked body how fire can hurt.’ If I cannot bear the short torment of this little fire now, how shall I be able to bear the eternal torments of hell-fire? And I shall certainly go to hell if I do what you wish.’ Think thus, dear children, and when you are tempted to commit sin, say: ‘No, I will not do it, I will not go to hell.’ If you think directly of hell when you are tempted, you will be sure not to go there after your death. May God preserve you all from the pains of hell!

III. PART.

MEANS OF GRACE,

WHICH ALL IN GENERAL MUST MAKE USE OF.

Why are you in this world? To know God etc. (Quest. 1). You know God through faith; you love and serve God when you keep His commandments. I have explained to you about faith and the commandments; we will now go on to another point which is necessary for us that we may rightly believe and keep the commandments, and obtain eternal salvation.

169. Can we, of our own strength, keep the commandments and save our soul?

No, we need the help of God's grace, to do that.

Can we, *of our own strength*, keep the commandments? What does that mean? When do we, of our own strength, keep the commandments? Little Philip wanted to take home a basketful of potatoes; but as the basket was too heavy; he called to his little sister, and she helped him, and so they got the basket home. His big brother Nicholas lifted his basket up, and carried it all alone to the house. Now, which had carried his basket of his own strength? Nicholas. Why? Because nobody helped him to do it, he did it all alone, his own strength was great enough. But Philip did not carry the basket of his own strength. Why? Because someone had to help him, as he was not able to do it alone. When should we keep the commandments and obtain eternal salvation of our own strength? We should do this of our own strength if nobody helped us to do it, if we did it all alone. Can we do that? No, somebody, that is, *God*, must help us to do it; we require *God's help*. And this help which God gives us to enable us to keep the commandments, and to obtain eternal salvation, is called *grace* (Quest. 107 and 108). So then, what is grace? Who gives it to us? What do we need grace for? Without this grace, it is quite impossible for anyone to get to Heaven; without this grace, we cannot say one little prayer properly; nor do the least good work which will help us to get to Heaven. We have, then, absolute need of this grace every day and every hour of our lives. Now, what must we do to obtain this grace? or, as the Catechism asks:

170. How do we obtain the grace of God?

We obtain the grace of God chiefly by means of Prayer and the holy Sacraments.

We obtain the grace of God when we pray and when we receive the sacraments. That is why prayer and the sacraments are called *means of grace*, that is, means by which we obtain grace, just as medicine is the means of health to a sick person, because through it he obtains health. But the Catechism says '*chiefly*'. There are other means of grace, but the principal means are prayer and the sacraments; through them we obtain grace most easily and most abundantly. I will now speak to you of what is the most necessary for you to know of both these means of grace, and first of all of the sacraments.

OF THE SACRAMENTS.

171. Who instituted the holy Sacraments?

Jesus Christ, Our Lord, instituted the holy Sacraments.

This question means: Who made the sacraments in order that we might obtain grace through them? Our Lord, Jesus Christ; for instance, He said to His disciples: 'Baptize the people, then, they will receive this grace; and if anyone has sinned grievously, he must confess to you (or to your successors, the bishops and priests), and you must say such and such holy words over him, then, he will receive the grace of forgiveness.'

172. How many Sacraments did Christ institute?

Christ instituted Seven Sacraments.

173. What are the Seven Sacraments?

1. Baptism,
2. Confirmation,
3. Holy Eucharist,
4. Penance,
5. Extreme Unction,

6. Holy Order,

7. Matrimony.

Before I explain these seven sacraments to you, one by one, I must tell you more fully what a sacrament is, or what belongs to a sacrament.

174. How many parts belong to a Sacrament?

Three parts: 1. its Visible Sign, 2. its Invisible Grace, 3. its Institution by Jesus Christ.

In a knife there are *two parts*; a blade and a handle. If either of these parts is wanting, then, there is no knife. So also, to a sacrament belong three parts, there must be: 1. a visible sign, 2. we must obtain by it an invisible grace, 3. Jesus Christ must have instituted it. If any of these parts is wanting, then, it is no sacrament. I must, however, explain these three parts to you still more fully.

1. *A Visible Sign.* *Visible* means that which can be seen. In each of the sacraments, something is done which can be perceived outwardly, can be seen; for instance, when a child is baptized, water is poured upon his head, he is washed. This which is done visibly, is a *sign*, it points out something to you. When you pass by a house and see smoke coming out of the chimney, you understand that there is a fire burning there. What has told or shown you that? . . . The smoke is then a sign of fire. Why? . . . So also that which is done visibly in the sacraments is a sign, because it shows something. For instance, in baptism the child is washed. Why do you wash yourself? That you may become clean. The washing of the child, therefore, shows that he is made clean. But, will he be cleansed in his body? No, in his soul. The soul is unclean, because it has original sin upon it, and now, it is cleansed from original

sin, through sanctifying grace. The washing shows, then, that the soul of the child is made clean, and that it obtains what?

2. *An Invisible Grace.* In every sacrament we receive grace from God; in baptism, for instance, the grace of being cleansed from sin, and of becoming a child of God etc. This grace the child obtains at the precise moment when it is washed, and the priest says the holy words which Jesus Christ taught His disciples: 'I baptize thee, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' At that instant, the child is cleansed from original sin. Can we see that the child is cleansed? Does it look different after baptism to what it did before? No, because grace is *invisible*, we cannot see it, it is not received in the body which can be seen; but in the soul which cannot be seen.

3. *The Institution by Jesus Christ* (Quest. 171). God alone can give grace. Therefore, it was God alone who could say: 'He who is baptized in such a manner shall receive grace', or: 'He who confesses his sins in such a manner shall be absolved in such a manner, shall have grace.' Can a man who has no money himself say: 'Every one who comes to me to-day shall have half-a-crown?' Can a man who has no grace (to give) say: 'Every one who is baptized shall receive grace?' Only God (Jesus Christ who is God) can so speak, could, therefore, institute the sacraments. So first, what grace do we receive in the first sacrament?

175. What graces do we receive in holy Baptism?

In holy Baptism we are

1. cleansed from original sin, and from all sins which we may have committed before Baptism;

2. we are made holy, made children of God, and heirs to the kingdom of Heaven.

When a person is baptized, he is, therefore, 1. *cleansed*, that is, made clean, from *original sin* (repetition of Quest. 52). Original sin is like a vile stain upon the soul. If there is a stain on a white garment, it makes the garment ugly; but if the stain is removed, then the garment becomes clean and beautiful again. So original sin renders the soul of man so vile and ugly that it displeases God; through baptism original sin is removed, and now, the soul is clean and beautiful so that God takes pleasure in it again.

But the answer says further: In baptism we are cleansed *from all the sins which we may have committed before we were baptized*. Can a child then commit sin before it is baptized? No, it is not children that are meant here. Now and then, grown-up people are baptized, Jews or heathens who have already lived perhaps 20, 30, or 40 years. They, perhaps, committed sin before baptism, by telling lies, cursing and swearing, anger etc., they have, therefore, not only the guilt of original sin upon them, but they are guilty of other sins besides which render their soul unclean and odious. When such a Jew or heathen is baptized (after his baptism he is no longer a Jew or a heathen, but a Christian), he is cleansed not only from original sin, but also all the sins which he had committed before baptism are forgiven him.

When a person is baptized, he is 2. *made holy*, that is, he becomes holy (recapitulation Quest. 47 and 108), obtains sanctifying grace, his soul becomes quite good and beautiful so that God and the holy angels take delight in it. He becomes a *child of God*. God takes him for His child, says: 'I will be thy Father,' God loves him as a father loves his only child, takes care of him and gives him every thing he needs etc., lastly, he who is baptized, becomes *heir to the kingdom of*

Heaven, that is, he will one day inherit Heaven; just as children inherit the property of their parents, so he who is baptized (who has really become a child of God), inherits the best and most precious possession which his Heavenly Father has, namely, Heaven; and when he dies, God takes him up to Heaven.

A rich prince was driving in a beautiful carriage, and saw a child lying in the road. The child's parents were dead, and he was quite forsaken, all covered with dirt, and half-dead with cold and hunger. The prince took compassion on the child, picked him up out of the road, and took him home to his beautiful house, and had him made clean and dressed as a prince, and allowed him to eat at his table with him; in short, he treated him like his own child, and promised him, if he behaved well, he should inherit the whole of his wealth. How happy the child was! When he looked back and thought: 'I was hungry and miserable and nearly dead, and now, I am so rich, so happy', how he must have thanked that good prince! Now, dear children, God has done still more for you, you are far happier than that child. When you came into the world, you also were very unhappy, defiled with original sin, poor and helpless, and must have perished miserably (not been able to get to Heaven). And then, the great and glorious God took compassion on you, and had you made clean from original sin, clothed your soul with the precious and heavenly garment of sanctifying grace, took you to be His own children, and promised that you should one day be happy for ever with Him in Heaven. On the same day as you were born, many thousands of other children came into the world; but the greater part of them did not receive the sacrament of baptism. How unfortunate poor heathen children are; how fortunate you are! How have you deserved that God should show you so much mercy?

O, be very thankful! Thank God for the grace of holy baptism, for having taken you to be His own children. Promise Him that you will be His good and obedient children. Would it not have been horrible if the child I have been telling you about, had grieved and offended that good prince? It would be still more horrible if you were to offend your good Heavenly Father.

When you were baptized, your god-parents promised for you (because you were too young yet to promise for yourselves) that, when you grew up, you would believe in God, keep His commandments, and not offend Him by committing sin. These promises are called baptismal vows. You are old enough now, and can make these promises to God yourselves, or, as we say, renew your baptismal vows. You can do this by saying to God: 'Dear Heavenly Father! I thank Thee for having adopted me as Thy child in holy baptism; and for having made me a Catholic, I promise Thee that I will be true to the Catholic faith, and, by the help of Thy grace, I promise faithfully to keep all Thy commandments, and never more to offend Thee by committing sin.'

Renew your baptismal vows thus every Sunday (before the service begins). You will be reminded of your baptism by the sight of the baptismal Font in the church. There is one day in particular on which you should especially think of your baptism, and renew your baptismal vows. It is your name-feast. That is, the day on which the feast is kept of the saint whose name you took in baptism. (What is your Christian name? . . . Who is your patron-saint then? . . . When do you keep your name-feast? . . .) You should, therefore, on that day specially thank God for the grace of holy baptism, and renew your baptismal vows, and pray thus to your patron-saint: O holy saint N., pray for me that I may faithfully keep the sanctifying grace which I received

in holy baptism, live a good and holy life as thou didst, and one day be with thee in Heaven! ¹

We now come to the second of the sacraments. What is it called?

176. What do we receive in the Sacrament of Confirmation?

In the Sacrament of Confirmation we receive strength from the Holy Ghost to confess our faith steadfastly.

When Our dear Lord was taken prisoner by the Jews, and even after he died, the apostles were very much afraid. They believed in Jesus; but they did not steadfastly confess their faith. He *steadfastly confesses* (Quest. 26) *his faith* who says publicly: 'I believe in Jesus Christ, I am a Catholic', and remains firm in this profession, never allowing himself to be dissuaded from it, even if he be threatened or tortured. The apostles did not do this. Peter, for instance, said through fear: "I know not the man (Jesus)", he denied his faith through fear. But when the time was near when they were to go forth from Jerusalem, Jesus sent them *the Holy Ghost* (Quest. 107), on the Feast of Pentecost, and *strengthened them*, made them strong so that they no longer feared, no longer allowed themselves to be forced to deny their faith; but even when they were beaten, ill-used, tormented, they always steadfastly confessed their faith in Jesus.

But was it only the apostles who required to be strengthened by the Holy Spirit? No; all Christians

¹ One might perhaps ask the children, each one separately, if they know anything of the life of their patron-saint, and, according to circumstances, do them the pleasure of relating something about them. (Later on, they might be encouraged to read the legends again for themselves.)

must steadfastly acknowledge their faith, and all require strength from the Holy Ghost to do so. Does Jesus send the Holy Ghost to all Christians, in the form of fiery tongues, as He did to the apostles? No, but he instituted the sacrament of confirmation for that purpose. The bishop administers the sacrament of confirmation by laying his hands on the head of each one whom he confirms, and making the sign of the cross on the forehead of each one with holy chrism or oil which has been specially prepared and blessed for that purpose, saying at the same time: 'I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and confirm thee with the chrism (oil) of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' And in the same moment, he who is confirmed receives, through the Holy Ghost, the grace of strength that he may always steadfastly confess his faith. The holy martyrs received this grace and became so strong (in their soul) that they (and there were even feeble little children amongst them) held out against the most fearful torments, rather than deny their faith and offend God.

Dear children, you also will obtain this grace when you receive the sacrament of confirmation; and this will happen when you grow up, when you will have greater dangers, when many amongst you, just as the apostles had to go forth from Jerusalem, will be obliged to go forth yourselves amongst all sorts of bad people. In the meantime try to learn well during the instruction so that you may know your faith better, and, as I have told you before, be very careful not to lose the grace of the Holy Spirit, sanctifying grace, through sin (Quest. 108).

We now come to the third sacrament, the highest and holiest of all the seven. What is it?

177. What is contained in the Holy Eucharist, or the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar?

The Holy Eucharist, or the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar contains the true Body and the true Blood of Jesus Christ under the appearances of bread and wine.

What does the priest hold up on high at the time of the elevation in the holy Mass when the people strike their breasts? He holds up the Sacred Host. (It is white like snow, and it is round.) After that he holds up the chalice. And when the people go to Holy Communion, the priest also places a host on the tongue of each person; but it is smaller than that which he holds up on high at the elevation. This Sacred Host (together with what is in the chalice after the consecration) is then the third sacrament, the *Most Holy Sacrament of the altar*. Why is it called the *Most Holy Sacrament*? Because it is holier than all the other sacraments, the most holy of all (and because Jesus Christ, the All-holy, is in the Sacrament). And why is it called sacrament *of the altar*? When the priest is going to give the people Holy Communion where does he go? to the pulpit? No, he goes to the altar, the Most Holy Sacrament is kept on the altar. (I will tell you later on how it comes there.) It is, therefore, called the sacrament of the altar.

Now, the Catechism asks, with regard to this holy sacrament of the altar, what it *contains*, what is in it. The answer is: 'The Most Holy Sacrament' etc. . . . Well then, what is in this Most Holy Sacrament? The *true Body*, that means (Quest. 20 and 56), we do not merely say, it is the Body of Christ, but it is really so. Look at this crucifix. Who is hanging there? Our Saviour. But is it really *true* that this is Our Saviour (His Head, His Hands etc.)? No, we only say so, it is only a

picture of Our Saviour, it only looks like Him. Is it the same in the Holy Sacrament? Do we *only say* that it is the Body of Christ? No, it is the *true* Body, it is the very same Body which lay in the crib, hung on the cross, and is now in Heaven. And so also in the chalice there is the *true* Blood of Christ; we do not merely say so, but it is the very same Blood which, at the death of Jesus Christ, gushed forth from His Sacred Wounds.

But in the Holy Sacrament we see no body, it does not look as Our Saviour looked, and that which is in the chalice does not look red like blood. It is only in Heaven, dear children, that the Body and Blood of Our dear Lord look like a human Body, only unspeakably more glorious and shining and beautiful.—The Most Holy Sacrament contains the Body and Blood of Christ, *under the appearances of bread and wine*, that means, the Body of Christ looks like white bread; the Blood of Christ looks like wine. It seems to us, as though it were bread and wine, but it is no longer bread and wine, but the Body and Blood of Christ. Do we know that for a certainty? Yes, we are quite certain of it, because Jesus Himself told us so, and what He says, is most certainly true, even when we cannot understand it.

But how is it then that Our dear Lord is present on the altar? You will understand that when I have explained the following questions to you.

178. When are the bread and wine changed into the Body and Blood of Christ?

When the words of Consecration, ordained by Jesus Christ, are pronounced by the priest in the holy Mass.

When the priest goes to the altar to say Mass, he takes with him on a little bright gilt plate, called the

paten, a host, a round white bread (it is not yet the Body of Christ). At the offertory he pours wine into the chalice, then, at the consecration, he says over this bread and over this wine the holy words which Jesus Himself taught the apostles, and through them all priests. The very moment the priest has spoken these holy words, there are no longer bread and wine present, but the Body and Blood of Christ. The bread has become the Body of Christ, and the wine has become the Blood of Christ. I could also say: The bread is *changed* into the Body of Christ, and the wine is *changed* into the Blood of Christ. (Example: The caterpillar is changed into a butterfly, but here the change is visible; in the Mass it is invisible. Jesus changed water into wine.) That is why that part of the Mass where the priest changes the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ is sometimes called the *change*, that is, the change of substance, or *transubstantiation*, but it is more generally called the consecration.

Bread and wine are, therefore, changed into the Body and Blood of Christ in the holy Mass.

179. What is the holy Mass.

The holy Mass is the unbloody Sacrifice of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

This answer means: In the holy Mass, *Our Lord and Saviour*, i. e. Redeemer, Jesus Christ, *offers* (gives) *Himself* up as a sacrifice to His Heavenly Father, but in a manner so that His Blood is not shed.

But now, what is a sacrifice or an offering? You cannot quite understand that yet; but, in the meantime, remember that an offering is a present which men bring to God (in order to honour and adore Him; Quest. 66)¹.

¹ Reference to the sacrifices of Cain and Abel, as also to the offering up of Isaac. A further or more exact explanation of the

Our dearest Lord offered Himself, gave Himself up, to His Heavenly Father, from the very first moment of His coming into this world. It was as though He said to His Heavenly Father: 'Eternal Father! Thou hast willed that I should take a Body and a Soul; I offer up to Thee this Body and Soul to be employed only for Thy honour and glory.' I will think, say, and do, all things for the love of Thee (reference to what has been said on Quest. 66). In this way, Jesus offered Himself up to His Heavenly Father, His whole life long. But He offered Himself, gave Himself up, sacrificed Himself, in a more special manner on the cross. There, out of obedience to His Heavenly Father, He allowed His Body to be crucified, His Blood to be shed, and His life to be taken. Thus He offered up, sacrificed to God His Body and Blood. It was as though He said: 'Behold, Dearest Father! in obedience to Thy Will, to honour Thee, for the love of Thee, I give up My Body and My Blood for Thy poor sinful creatures that they may not be cast down into hell, but that Thou mayst take them into Thy favour again, restore them to Thy grace, and admit them into Thy heavenly kingdom' (reference to what has been said at Quest. 77 and 82). The death of Jesus was, therefore, a sacrifice, but a bloody sacrifice, that is, Jesus shed His Blood in it, lost His life.

In the holy Mass Jesus does the same as He did on the cross, only in an unbloody manner. He again offers His Body and Blood to His Heavenly Father, but He no longer sheds His Blood under cruel torments and dies. —He, as it were, says to His Heavenly Father: 'Eternal Father! I bring Thee here My Body which, for the love of Thee, I gave up in death on the cross for

notion of sacrifice appears at this stage unnecessary; it is also too difficult for young children.

sinful men, My Blood which, for the love of Thee, I shed for them. I offer Thee once more my wounded Body, my Blood which was shed, for Thy honour and to please Thee. O, remember that I received these wounds for sinful men, that I shed My Blood for them, that I suffered the punishment of their sins, and do not punish them, do not cast them down into hell, but give them Thy grace that they may save their souls and go to Thee in Heaven.' And Our Heavenly Father has infinite pleasure in the obedience, in the sacrifice of His only begotten Son, and forgives us, for His sake, and gives us grace and every blessing both for body and soul ¹.

O dear children! If you only knew how holy the Mass is, how much Jesus proves in it His love for us, how many graces He obtains for us, you would certainly always assist at the holy sacrifice of the Mass with the greatest attention, reverence and devotion, and there is certainly nothing that is more necessary for me to warn you against than talking etc., during the holy Mass. If you had been beneath the cross when Jesus gave up His most holy Body and Blood for your sins and for the sins of all men, and you had known who it was that was dying there, and that He was suffering thus for you; what would have been your feelings? Surely you would have thought of nothing whatever but of the dear Jesus, and of how much He loved you, and it would have grieved you sorely that you, through your sins, were the cause of His sufferings and death. And most surely you would have begged for pardon, and prayed to Him thus: 'O dearest Jesus! I am deeply grieved that I have been the cause of Thy torments. I will never, never sin again, but will always love Thee with

¹ As a father to please his obedient child remits the punishment of the disobedient one and takes him into his favour again (Quest. 77).

my whole heart.' Well now, children, when you go to holy Mass, it is the same as if you were standing beneath the cross. For there, in the holy Mass, is the same Jesus who died on the cross for us, and now, brings His crucified Body and His Blood which was shed for us, to His Heavenly Father to plead for us poor sinners that He may have mercy on us. So then, always behave at holy Mass with the same awe and reverence that you would feel if you saw Jesus visibly on the cross. Never talk, never laugh, never look about you. This would be a sin and would grieve Our dear Saviour very much. Pray God to give you, and your parents, and your brothers and sisters, all the graces which you need both for body and soul. Think, during the Mass, of what Jesus suffered for you, and promise Him that you will never sin again, never commit such or such sins . . . You should think thus, more especially during the elevation, when you strike your breast in token of sorrow for your sins, and say: 'O Jesus, be merciful to me a sinner! O Jesus, forgive me my sins!' And again in order to promise Jesus that you will never, never offend Him any more, but will always be His good and obedient children, say: 'O Jesus, I love Thee! O Jesus, I am Thine in life and in death.'

But Jesus is not only present in the most holy sacrament of the altar, during the holy Mass; but He is present in the church where the Blessed Sacrament is kept, at all times, always, both night and day. What must we do then? What are our obligations to Our dear Lord in the Blessed Sacrament? The Catechism tells us this in the next question.

180. Should we not also adore Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament?

Yes, we must adore Jesus Christ in the Blessed

Sacrament, because He is, as God and Man, really present there.

Whom must we *adore*? (Quest. 135.) God. Jesus is God (Quest. 56). Therefore, we must adore Him also. But Jesus is *as God and man* (as God, as He has been from all eternity, and with the human body and soul which He took when He became man) *really present* in the Blessed Sacrament (that means, it is true that He is really there, it is not merely said so (Quest. 177). Therefore, we must adore Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

The Shepherds adored Jesus when He lay before them as God and man in the crib. The same Jesus is also as God and man in the Blessed Sacrament for us. We must, then, also adore Him in the Blessed Sacrament.

Look at this picture; you see here the Blessed Sacrament in the monstrance (with which the priest always gives the solemn blessing). Angels are kneeling round with clasped hands adoring the Blessed Sacrament. Yes, children! The holy angels are in the church where the Blessed Sacrament is, and they adore it with the greatest reverence. What should you also do, then? If you had been allowed to go to the crib with the shepherd's children in Bethlehem, with what devotion you would have prayed to the dear Infant Jesus! Most certainly you would not have looked about you and talked then, but would have knelt down with the greatest reverence, and, filled with joy, you would have looked upon the Infant Jesus, and told Him how much you loved Him, and have begged Him also to love you and to let you one day be with Him in Heaven. The very same Saviour who lay in the crib, is also in the Blessed Sacrament; how must you behave yourselves then in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament? What should you not do? What should you do?

When you come into the church, take holy water and imagine to yourselves that you are going to visit the dear Infant Jesus in His crib. Before you go into your seat, genuflect very reverently before the high altar where the Blessed Sacrament is, there is always a light burning before it, because Jesus, the light of the world, is always present there both day and night. You must also genuflect again before you go out of the church, and, in fact, as often as you pass before the high altar. Kneel down also very reverently whenever a priest bearing the Blessed Sacrament passes by you on his way to the sick. Salute the Blessed Sacrament with this hymn of praise: Blessed and praised every moment be the most holy sacrament of the altar, now and for ever, Amen! Also when you are near a church and you hear the bell ring at the elevation; kneel down, or if you cannot exactly do that, at least, show some outward mark of respect for the Blessed Sacrament and strike your breast and say the prayer which I told you of before (see the preceding Question).

One thing more: Our dear Lord is, out of infinite love for us, present day and night in the church in the ever Blessed Sacrament, in order to be quite close to us, and to pray His Heavenly Father to give us the graces we need. Since He once called little children to Him, and took them up in His arms and lovingly blessed them, so is He pleased now when children come to Him in the church and ask Him to bless them. He loves such children very much, and gives them His blessing, and later on, He comes gladly into their hearts (in the Holy Communion). Go then, dear children, gladly into the church, not only to the holy Mass, but also sometimes when you pass by the church, and have time, go in for a little while and say one or more Our Fathers, and then, say: 'Dear Jesus who art present here in the

Blessed Sacrament, I adore Thee and thank Thee for every thing which Thou hast done for me, a poor child. I pray Thee give me the grace to become good and holy.' And then, you can go on to pray for some special grace.

Our dear Lord loves you so much in the Blessed Sacrament that, later on (when you are older and better instructed and more pious), He will come into your hearts. You cannot yet quite understand how great a happiness that is, but you can already rejoice in that great grace which awaits you. You can pray even now to Our dear Lord to help you that you may become pious and good, so that He may be pleased to come to you and bring you so many graces and blessings.

What is the fourth holy sacrament? What grace does God give us in this sacrament?

181. What benefit do we receive through the holy Sacrament of Penance?

Through the holy Sacrament of Penance we receive the remission of those sins which we have committed after Baptism.

You have often seen the priest go into the confessional in the church, and you have seen people go there to him, and kneel there for a time and speak to him. What were those people doing then? They were at confession, they were telling the priest the sins which they had committed, and that they were very sorry, and would never commit them any more. And the priest gave them a penance, and absolved them from their sins. Now, these people who confess thus, receive the *sacrament of penance*. What grace do they receive in that sacrament? *The remission of those sins* (God forgives them, namely, the priest in God's name; Quest. 115) *which they have committed after baptism*. Why do we say, which

they have committed after baptism? Are there any other sins then? (Reference to what has been said on baptism, Quest. 175.) But this forgiveness is received only by those who are heartily sorry that they have sinned, and are firmly resolved never to commit (at least mortal) sin again, and who sincerely confess to the priest all their (at least grievous) sins which they can remember.

Is then the remission of sin so great a benefit for us? Think, dear children, what your feelings would be if you had offended your parents so seriously that they sent you out of the room, and said you should no longer sit down to table with them, never come into their presence again, and that you should be severely punished. How grieved you would be at the thought: 'I have so terribly offended my good parents, I shall never dare to go to them again!' And every moment you would be afraid that you would be punished. But your father sees your sorrow and he comes to you; you think he is now coming to punish you, but instead of that, he takes you kindly by the hand and says: 'All is now forgiven you, come with me, you may be with us again, and be our own dear child once more.' How joyful, how happy would you then be! Well, see, children, a child who commits a mortal sin offends his Heavenly Father so much that He banishes him, casts him out, will have nothing more to do with him. How wretched such a child is! He says to himself: 'God can no longer bear the sight of me, I am hateful and abominable in His sight', his conscience torments him, and he must think: 'God may take away my life at any moment, and if I die as I am now I shall be lost for all eternity.' O God, how great must be the fright of such a child when he thinks of this! And now, in the same moment that this child makes a good confession, God forgives him everything, makes him His child again, his soul becomes once

more beautiful and pleasing in His sight and if the child were to die now, he would go to the angels in Heaven, and be happy for all eternity. And he obtains all this happiness through the sacrament of penance¹.

You also, dear children, have already committed many sins against God. When you think seriously of it, it ought to make you very sad that you have offended so good a Father, and that He no longer loves you (so much), no longer takes (so much) pleasure in you, and that you have deserved so great a punishment (hell or at least purgatory). Rejoice now beforehand that God will shortly forgive you all these sins, and love you again very dearly—namely, when you are allowed to go to confession, and resolve now that you will be very attentive to the instruction on confession which you will have by-and-by. In the meantime carefully avoid all sins, particularly those which you commit the most frequently, so that when the time comes you may receive the holy sacrament of penance worthily.

You have now heard for what purpose Our dear Lord instituted the sacrament of penance, namely, for the remission of sins committed after baptism; but:

182. Why was the Sacrament of Extreme Unction instituted?

For the welfare of the soul and the body of the sick.

This question and answer mean: Jesus Christ ordained (Quest. 171 and 174) that the sick should be anointed

¹ The story of the prodigal son might be referred to, as also that of Magdalen, how sad and wretched she was, and how the words of Our dear Lord: 'Thy sins are forgiven thee', consoled and comforted her. It will then be shown that the worthy reception of absolution is just as good as if Jesus Himself said to the penitent: 'Go, thy sins are forgiven thee.'

with holy oil by the priest, and when they are anointed (when the holy sacrament of extreme unction is received), it is *for their comfort and healing*, that is, they are, by that, comforted and healed, and obtain eternal salvation (Heaven).

When anybody is very ill, the priest is sent for to come and administer the last sacraments to the sick person. The priest, first, hears the sick man's confession and absolves him from his sins; then, he gives him Holy Communion, the Body of Our Lord. Afterwards he says a few more prayers, and then, he dips his thumb into the holy oil, and makes with it the sign of the cross on the sick person's eyes, ears, nose, mouth, hands and feet. Whilst he is doing this, he says the holy words which Jesus taught us, and prays God to forgive the sick person all the sins which he has committed through his eyes (by seeing), through his ears etc., all his life long. The sick person obtains by that means a great grace (if he has previously, as far as is necessary or possible, made a good confession, if he is very sorry that he has sinned, if, therefore, he receives the holy sacrament with true contrition), namely:

1. God forgives him all the sins which may be still upon him, which he has not *been able* to confess.

2. Our dear Lord *comforts him*. Whom should we comfort? Those who weep, those who are in sorrow, who are suffering pain and anguish. How could you, for instance, comfort a child who was sick and sorrowful? You could say to him very lovingly: 'Don't grieve, you will soon be better, God will help you'; or you could perhaps give him something to relieve his pain, or to quench his thirst etc.; you could give him something which would cause him pleasure, and then, he would not think so much about his sufferings. Now, see, dear children, poor sick people have great pain, and are often very sad;

then, God comforts them by means of the holy sacrament of extreme unction. He also says to them inwardly, in their souls: 'Be of good cheer, be not troubled about your sins, I have forgiven you and have restored you again to My love, you will now get well', or 'I shall take you to be with me in Heaven.' Further, Our dear Lord sometimes causes the sick person's pain to be less severe. And lastly, God often gives sick people inwardly, in their hearts, so much joy that they no longer feel their pains so much, and that they bear them quite patiently and willingly. Our dear Lord does all that by means of the holy sacrament of extreme unction, for *the comforting* of the sick.

3. God causes the sick person to be *healed*, his body to be cured, if it is for his good, that is, if God foresees that the sick person will live a good life, and obtain a great reward in Heaven. But if it is not good for the sick person that his body should be cured, that is, if God foresees that he would, if he were well again, lead a bad life and at last go to hell, then God causes the anointing to be all the more for the *healing* of the soul, that is, not only does God forgive him his sins, heal his soul from the sickness of sin, as we have already said, but He gives him grace that he may bear his sickness with patience, die a good death, and obtain eternal happiness.

How good God is! What care He takes of poor sick people, and how, when none but He can help them, He comes so lovingly to their aid, and helps and comforts them both in body and soul! If the priest should ever come into your house to anoint any body, kneel down with the other people, and pray very devoutly, that God may have mercy on the sick person. And pray also when you meet a priest going to visit anyone who is very ill; and say an 'Our Father' for the person who

is sick. You would do well to say an 'Our Father' for yourself also that God may grant you a happy death, that you may obtain the grace of receiving the holy sacraments of penance, of Holy Communion and of extreme unction before you die, or, which is the same thing, that you may not die a sudden and unprovided death.

There now remain two more sacraments to be explained which however are not received by everybody. First: —the sixth sacrament:

183. Why was the Sacrament of Holy Order instituted?

To communicate to those who become priests the powers and the graces of the Priesthood.

The Catechism asks: Why was the sacrament of holy order instituted? This is the same as saying: Why did Jesus Christ institute the sacrament of holy order, or of what use is holy order? To communicate to those who become priests *the powers* and the *grace of the priesthood* (that they may be able and may be allowed to do what priests do, for instance, say Mass, forgive sins etc., Quest. 115) *and grace* (that is, God helps them that they may be able to do all this *well*, say Mass devoutly, hear confessions patiently and zealously, and tell the people what is right so that they may amend their lives etc.).

As you have already learnt (Quest. 111), the bishop alone would not be able to attend to all the Catholics in his diocese, he, therefore, requires people to help him; because, in every (large) place, there must be some one to say Mass, preach, hear confessions etc. Can everybody do that? No; because in the holy Mass, for instance, the bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, in confession people's sins are forgiven etc. Can a man of himself do that? No, properly speaking, only God can do that; and if a man is also to do it,

God must give him the power. And this power God gives in the sacrament of holy order. He commanded the apostles and their successors, the bishops (Quest. 111) to lay hands on those whom they wished to ordain priests (correctly speaking, to stretch out their hands over them), and to say certain prayers (and to observe certain other ceremonies), then, the same would be priests, and would have the power to say Mass, to absolve from sin etc.

But to be a good priest, to say Mass devoutly, to make known the word of God correctly, to govern the people in spiritual things, all this is very difficult, no man can do it unless God helps him. And God will require a very strict account of priests, as to whether they have done all this well. I also, dear children, shall one day have to answer before God, as to whether I have rightly instructed you in the faith, whether I have rightly dispensed to you the holy sacrament of penance, and (later on) the holy sacrament of the altar, whether I have absolved or permitted to approach Holy Communion any child who was unworthy. And if there should be anything that I have not done rightly, I shall be severely punished by Almighty God. In order, then, that the priest may be able to fulfil the duties of his very difficult office, God gives him special graces in the sacrament of holy order.

In this sacrament, dear children, there are two things you should notice more especially.

1. Since priests are the representatives of Jesus Christ (Quest. 111); since they have such great and such holy powers, and since you receive through them such great benefits, you should love, honour and respect them very much. Priests are called reverend (people call them so) on account of their high dignity, and of their being worthy to be held in high honour.

If you meet a priest, salute him respectfully, and when the priest instructs you, admonishes you etc., receive it, as if it were Jesus Christ Himself who had spoken thus to you.

2. Since priests have so difficult an office to fill, and so great an account to render, you should very often pray for them¹. Will you not, therefore, say an 'Our Father' now and then for me, that I may rightly exercise my difficult office, may instruct you well, and guide and lead you to Heaven?

We come now to the seventh sacrament, namely, matrimony. Why did Jesus Christ institute this holy sacrament?

184. For what end was the Sacrament of Matrimony instituted?

In order that those who marry may receive the grace to fulfil faithfully the duties of the marriage-state.

When a wedding takes place, what happens? Two people *are married*, a young man and a young woman, and they become husband and wife. Before the wedding they were in the single state, but when they married, they entered into the state of marriage, became married people. Married people have special *duties* to perform; that is, they must do many things, God has commanded them to do many things which single people do not have to do; for instance, they must bring up their children properly, they must take proper care of their work-people, and so on. These are the *duties of the married state*; and when people enter into the state of marriage,

¹ I think this point cannot be too early impressed on the children. People in general pray much too little for their priest, perhaps, because his holy office and heavy responsibility is not appreciated.

they have to promise that they will *fulfil* these duties, that is, that they are willing to do all this as it should be done. Married people (father and mother) could not however *fulfil faithfully* these duties, that is, keep the promises they have made, unless God helped them, gave them the grace. Therefore, God gives them this grace, when they marry, in the *holy sacrament of matrimony*.

You have now heard what the holy sacraments are, and what great graces God has already given you, and will yet give you through them. Have then always a great reverence and respect for these holy sacraments.

When you receive the holy sacraments, do so with the same reverence and joy as if Jesus Christ Himself, for instance, absolved you from your sins, administered to you His most holy Body etc. Then, you will yourselves experience what great graces are obtained from God through the holy sacraments.

ON PRAYER.

In order to keep God's commandments and obtain eternal salvation, we require the help or grace of God (Quest. 169). This grace God gives us chiefly through the holy sacraments and through prayer (Quest. 170). You have heard all that is the most necessary for you to know, with regard to the holy sacraments. We now come to the second means of grace, prayer. As the Catechism asks:

185. What is Prayer?

Prayer is the raising of our hearts and minds to God.

He who prays does what then? . . .

If I ask you what your mother is doing, you think of your mother, you direct your mind (for you think with your mind) to your mother. But if you were sick

amongst strangers, and thought of home and of your mother, of how good she always was to you, and you had a heartfelt love for your mother, and a longing to be with her that she might help you, and sorrow for having so often offended her, then, not only would your mind be with your mother, but your heart also (Quest. 121). You see her before you, as it were, it is as if you were speaking to her (of course she would not hear you and would not answer you).

Well now, you can also *think* of God with your understanding; for example, when I ask you something about God in the instruction etc., but that is not *prayer*. But you can also think of God in such a way that you feel a hearty love for Him, an interior joy that He is your Father, and a great longing to be with Him. You desire very much to please Him, and you feel a great sorrow for having offended Him etc., then, not only your mind, but also your heart is with God, *then* you pray. You speak then with God (even when you do not say anything at all with your lips). You tell Him, for example, either secretly in your heart, or in pronouncing the words: How much you love Him, how you long to be with Him, and how you hope to obtain some (particular) grace from Him. And it is not then the same as if you were amongst strangers, and thought of your mother and spoke to her; for God sees you and hears what you say to Him, and if you pray earnestly, He gives you an answer in your heart, tells you inwardly what He wills that you should do.

So remember this, children, when we speak to God, or when we think of Him with love, joy, desire or contrition, then we pray, because then we raise our hearts to God. Why do we say '*raise*'? This does not mean that we could really raise or lift up our hearts on high, just as we could lift up a basket in the air.

It only means: We direct our thoughts, our love etc. to Almighty God. And because God is up on high in Heaven, and we, as it were, take our thoughts away from the things which are on this Earth (such as play, clothes, toys etc.), therefore, we say: We lift up our minds and hearts to God.

When you speak to your mother, you have some intention in doing so, for instance, you wish to ask her something, to know something from her, or to ask her to give you something, or to tell her how much you love her etc. And it is the same when we speak to God. So the Catechism asks:

186. Why do we pray?

We pray, either to praise God, or to thank Him, or to ask Him for something.

So when we pray, we intend either

1. *to praise* God. When does the master praise a child? When he says: 'You are industrious, you have learnt your lessons well, you have been good etc.', therefore, when he says something good about him (so also you praise a picture when you say it is pretty etc.). Well then, when do you praise God? When you say, for instance: 'How great Thou art, dear Lord, since Thou art in Heaven, on Earth, and in all places! Thou art so good, Thou providest for so many millions of people and animals, and art such a kind and tender Father to all Thy creatures!'

When you see a very pretty picture or something similar, you are not generally silent, you say: O, how pretty! and you are pleased to speak about it. If you really knew and were to think of how beautiful and glorious and good God is, you would surely praise Him much more often. When you see the glorious Sun, the twinkling stars, the beautiful flowers, the lovely little

birds etc., you would exclaim: 'O blessed God, how great, how beautiful, how good Thou art!' And you would then be praising God. The acts of faith, hope and charity are prayers of praise (Quest. 137), for you are praising God when you are thinking and saying that He is the eternal, unerring truth, the infinite mercy and the highest and greatest good.

2. Again, we pray to God to *thank* Him. When do you thank anybody? When you receive any good thing. Well now, you receive *every* good thing from God (Quest. 11, 33 and 34). So you must thank Him above all. And how can you do that? You do this when you lift up your little hands and say: 'Dearest Father! I thank Thee with all my heart for being so good and kind a Father to me, and for having given me this—(here think of and mention the special grace for which you are thanking God), I will always be Thy good and obedient child.' And you thank God when you say your morning or night prayers, and also after your meals. So be careful never to miss your morning and night prayers, and the prayers before and after meals which you learnt a little while ago. Thank God also when He has shown you any particular favour, when, for instance, you get anything very good given you, or when your parents or your brothers or sisters have been ill, and they are cured, or (when, later on, you have been to confession) when you see poor sick people and think how God has given you your health and every blessing, or you think of what Jesus suffered for you etc., and then, you lift up your hands and say: 'Dearest Father! I thank Thee' etc. (see above).

3. We pray to God, to *ask Him for something*. When you would like a slice of bread and butter, or a new book etc., what do you do? You ask your parents to give it to you. But you need many things which your

parents are not able to give you (health, grace etc.), and generally speaking, they cannot give you anything unless God gives it to them. In the end, then, who alone can give you all things? What must you do, then, when you wish to obtain anything from God? You must ask Him for it. How can you do that? By praying to Him, He is so rich, and so powerful, and so good, He is both able and willing to grant you all you ask of Him if it is for your good. The 'Our Father' is a prayer of petition. And you can and should pray not only for yourselves, but also for others, especially for your parents, relations, benefactors and priests (Quest. 183), for the poor heathens (Quest. 53), for the souls in purgatory (Quest. 98). Indeed, you should pray for all men, and ask God, to let them go to Him in Heaven. Especially, pray to the good God very earnestly when you are in any necessity, any sorrow, when your parents are ill, when you are in any danger of sinning etc. Then, pray with all your heart, and say: 'Dearest Father! help me, I beseech Thee, in this necessity' etc.

You have heard why we should pray. The Catechism now asks:

187. How must we pray?

We must pray with devotion and confidence.

We must then 1. pray *with devotion*, pray devoutly, that is (Quest. 157 and 158), we must think of what we are saying to God in our prayer, we must think of God to whom we are speaking. And we must 2. pray with *confidence*. Suppose a man came into the school, and had all sorts of strange animals with him which he wanted to exhibit after school; but anyone who wanted to see them must pay a penny. Your sisters and brothers run joyfully home to ask your father to give them a penny. But you had offended your father,

just before you went to school. You also go home, but not nearly so joyfully as the other children. You are rather afraid to ask your father, and you think: 'He will not give me anything because I have been naughty.' Well now, have you confidence? Do you ask your father with confidence? Why not? Your sisters and brothers however ask with confidence; Why? Because they think: 'My father will be sure to give me a penny.' So then, when do you ask with confidence? When you think: 'I shall certainly get what I am asking for, my father will be sure to give it to me', or, as we can also say, you *hope* (Quest. 72) to obtain what you pray for. So then, when do you pray to God with confidence?

You are now going to hear more of these two points which we must observe in prayer, namely, devotion and confidence.

188. When do we pray devoutly?

When we pray from our hearts, and do all in our power to avoid distracting thoughts.

What must we do, then, that our prayer may be *devout*? We must 1. pray *from our hearts*, that is, we must not *merely* repeat the prayer with our lips, but it must come from our hearts, it must be very earnest.

I told you before (Quest. 151) about a shepherd-boy who, to make game of people, often cried out: 'Help, help, the wolf is here!' Was he in earnest in his petition? No; he said it with his lips, but in his heart there was no fear, nothing that he needed help for. But when the wolf really came, and he cried out for help, then, he was in earnest, then, his prayer came from his heart¹.

¹ Or an example might be given of a child who begs pardon, and is really very sorry that he has offended his parents, and of another who only begs pardon because he is obliged, but who is not really sorry in his heart (see Note at the end of Quest. 204).

When we speak to God, we must think of what we are saying to Him; we must be in earnest. So now, if a child said the 'Our Father', and thought nothing at all about God all the time, but thought of play, or of nice things, or of his lessons, would he pray devoutly? Would what he was saying to God come from his heart? No. So the Catechism says:

2. *We must do all in our power to avoid distracting thoughts* (or, as people also say, scattered thoughts). A child is minding sheep. Now, if the sheep all remain by one another, in the same place, they are altogether, collected; but if they run away from one another, some going one way and some another, then, they are scattered. And it is the same with thoughts during prayer. If you have all your thoughts together, if you think only of God and of your prayer, then, your thoughts are collected, and you pray devoutly; but if you think first of this thing, and then of that (of home, of school, of play etc.), then, your thoughts are scattered (distracted), you pray with distractions, without devotion. If you wish to pray devoutly, then, you must *do all in your power to avoid*, that is, shun, cast out as well as you can (you work with all your power, all your strength when you work as hard as you can) all such thoughts of other things which cause you to be distracted, inattentive. Why do we say *do all in our power*? Because we cannot always avoid such thoughts during prayer. Such thoughts come even frequently to people when they cannot possibly help it, when it is quite against their will; in that case, there is no sin. When we do what we can to drive these thoughts away, our prayer is good all the same. It is only when we willingly think of such things, or do not take any trouble to banish such thoughts, that our prayer is not good, and we commit a sin (Quest. 152).

When, during prayers, a child merely pronounces the words of the prayers, but is looking about all the time, looking at other children, at smart clothes, pictures etc., and is not thinking of his prayers at all, then, God is not well pleased with such a child, and his prayer cannot satisfy Him. A child has to congratulate his father on his birthday (wish him happiness), and he repeats some little verses about how much he loves his father etc. Well, he says it all so quickly, and does not look at his father at all, but at the cakes that he sees on the table, do you think his father can have any pleasure in this congratulation? Or, another child goes to beg pardon of the priest (teacher etc.) whom he has very much offended (or to ask permission to go to Holy Communion with the other children on Whit-Sunday). Well, he comes into the priest's room, and, instead of saluting him very reverently, and asking him very humbly, he mumbles a few words and looks round the room all the time at the pictures etc. Do you think the priest is pleased with this? Does not a child who behaves like that deserve to be sent away out of the room?

When you pray, you enter into the presence of the great and glorious God before whom the highest Kings and Emperors are more insignificant than poor miserable worms of the Earth, before Him whom the angels adore with trembling reverence. And you come to ask for grace, blessing, forgiveness that He may not cast you down into hell, that He may take you up to Heaven etc. Will you, then, whilst you are speaking with this great and glorious God, dare to stare about irreverently, to laugh and to think of other things, things quite different? And would God grant your prayer if you prayed to Him thus?

What must you do, then, in order to pray devoutly? Raise up your heart as well as your hands, that is, as

you put your hands together and raise them up towards Heaven, so raise up also your thoughts towards God. Before you begin your prayers, think for a moment and say to yourself: 'I am now going to speak to God; if I pray well, He will love me; if I pray badly, I shall offend Him, and I shall have to suffer for it one day in purgatory. I will now think of nothing else, I will say my prayers well. O Jesus! help me to pray.' Then, make the sign of the cross (Quest. 26), and if, during your prayer, other thoughts should occur to you, banish them out of your mind, and say again: 'O Jesus! help me to pray well.'¹ Never look about you, but look at your little prayer-book (or at the crucifix, or the altar etc.). If you do that, then, you will pray well, and God will be pleased to hear and accept your prayer.

You have heard that we must pray with confidence, that is, we must hope that God will give us what we pray for (of course, if we pray rightly, pray devoutly). But the Catechism asks:

189. May we hope that God will hear our prayers?

Yes, we may and ought to hope so when, what we pray for, is for our good.

In this answer two things are said: 1. We *may* hope that God will give us what we rightly pray for, that is, we are allowed to think: 'God will be sure to give it to me.' 2. We *ought* to hope it, that is, God wills that we should hope this, and if we did not hope, if we thought: 'God will not give me what I pray for'

¹ The catechist might suggest the realization of God's presence in a very striking manner, for instance, by saying: Imagine you are kneeling before the manger, before Mary with the Child Jesus on her lap, before the cross etc., or imagine Jesus is looking straight into your eyes, trying to see if you are praying with real love to Him.

(even if I pray rightly, and it is for my good), then, we should be offending God.

If you are hungry and want bread, or if you want some new clothes, or a book, you go to your father. You think, he will give it to you, why? You know that your father can give it to you (he has bread, money etc.), and that he is willing to give it to you (he loves you—you are his child). Well then, if you, at any time, need anything either for your body or your soul, who has all things? Who can give you everything? And who loves you the most of all? Who is your kindest father? Who is willing to give you all things? What may you, then, hope if you need anything, and you pray to Him rightly?

But there remains still something in the Catechism: We may hope that God will hear our prayers when *what we pray for is for our good*, namely, for our salvation, when it helps us to get to Heaven. Suppose you were ill, and the doctor had strictly forbidden you to eat apples. Well, you had a great desire for one, and you asked your mother for an apple. Could you hope that your mother would give you one? Certainly not. Yet, your mother has some apples; does she not love you then? Yes, and precisely because she loves you, she will not grant your request. She knows that it would not be good for you, that you would be the worse for it. People often pray like that to God, for things which would not be good for them, would not be good for their souls. Thus a sick child prays for health, but God knows, if he were cured, he would go with bad companions and would be lost. A poor man prays that he may have a great deal of money; but God knows, if he were rich, he would lead a bad life and go to hell. May these people hope that God will grant their prayers? Why not?

Well, see, dear children, very often when we pray, we do not know whether what we pray for would be good for us, therefore, we should pray thus: 'Dear Lord! give me these particular things—if Thou wilt, if it be for my good; but if it would do me harm, then do not give it to me.' And then, we may and ought to hope that God will give it to us if it is for our good.

190. Why should we hope that God will hear our prayers?

Because God has promised that He will hear our prayers through Jesus Christ, His Son.

You would like to have a new coat for Whit-Sunday, you need it perhaps, but it is not altogether necessary; you hope your parents will give it to you, but you are not quite sure of it. If, however, your father had been promising you for the last six months that you should have a new coat on Whit-Sunday, you might quite confidently hope for it; why? Because your father will keep his word. Well, God has promised us that He will give us everything that we ask Him for (in the right way). He told us this, through *His Son Jesus Christ*¹. Our dear Lord said: 'Whatsoever you ask the Father, in My name, He will give to you'. Well then, if we were still to think: 'If I pray devoutly, and if I pray for something that is for my good, yet God will not give it me', what should we be doing? We should be saying: 'God does not keep His promises, has not told the truth.' May we think or speak thus of Our good God?²

¹ These words "Through Jesus Christ" etc. might also be said to have the signification: We have not deserved that God should hear us; but because His beloved Son intercedes for us, because He has purchased grace for us, therefore, God gives us, for Jesus' sake, what we pray for.

² It would grieve good parents very much if their child whom they loved so tenderly, and for whom they had done so much, had

We must, therefore, pray with confidence, dear children, and if God does not help us directly, we must still continue to pray heartily. God has not promised to help us immediately. If He does not help to-day, perhaps He will in a week or a fortnight's time.

In the large city of Paris, there was once a good and pious child whose parents were ill, and could no longer earn anything; so that they must very soon have suffered from want. Well, this good child had learnt in the religious instruction, how readily God helps us; but he thought in his simplicity that he must write to the good God. So he wrote a letter: 'Dear Father in Heaven! My parents are ill and have no money to pay a doctor to come, or to buy food. Thou art so good and so rich, and Thou hast promised to give us all we ask for, I pray Thee, be so good as to send us something to eat, and please make my dear parents well again.' Then, he fastened up the letter and wrote outside: 'To the good God in Heaven.' And as he had seen the people in church always put money, for the honour of God, in the offertory-bag; he threw his letter also into the bag. Well, the good God immediately granted the prayer which this dear child made with so much loving confidence. He willed it so that just then a rich and pious lady was in the church, and she saw what the child did and questioned him about it. Then, God put it in her heart to help this good child, and so, the next day she sent a large basket filled with food and clothing, and some money to the child's parents, and also sent a doctor who very soon cured the parents. Thus God

no confidence in them, if he said sadly and sorrowfully: 'Who will help me, who cares for me?' So also would it grieve Our Heavenly Father who loves us so much, and always takes such loving care of us, if we were to think he would not help us any more.

granted this good child's prayer, because he prayed with so much confidence¹.

You also, dear children, should have great confidence in God. Pray to Him when you are in any trouble, or have need of anything, and God will surely help you if it is for your good and for your salvation.

I have now explained to you what "to pray" means, and how we ought to pray; but is it necessary for us to pray?

191. Is prayer necessary?

Yes, prayer is necessary, to obtain the grace and blessing of God, and one day to enjoy eternal happiness.

If I say: The eye is *necessary* for sight, that means: We must have eyes to be able to see, without eyes we could not see. Thus *prayer is necessary* etc. means, we must pray if we wish to obtain from God *grace* (Quest. 169) and *blessings*, i. e. benefits for body and soul (Quest. 146), and, some day after this life, to go to Heaven, or again: without prayer, if we do not pray, we do not obtain grace, God does not give us His blessing, and we shall not go to Heaven.

This is quite natural; does a child who does not care to speak to his parents, love them? Does he deserve that his parents should give him anything? Will a poor man who is too idle or too proud to beg get anything? If, therefore, a child is not willing to speak to His Heavenly Father, will He love him? Does he deserve that God should give him anything? If he is too idle to pray to God, will God give him His grace? No. And such a child will certainly not go to Heaven. About

¹ The example of the woman of Canaan might also be given (Matt. 15, 22).

seventy years ago, a very holy priest died (his name was Apollinaris). When he was a little child, he was often unwilling to say his prayers. So his father said to him one day: 'Child! you do not want to go to Heaven.' 'Why, Father?' asked the little one, 'I do indeed.' 'No', answered the father, 'for you are not willing to pray, and in Heaven they do nothing else but pray.' The boy was struck with this, and from that hour he prayed with great fervour. Remember this well, dear children, the great joy of the angels and saints in Heaven is that they are with God, that they can see His beauty and His glory, and can speak to Him and praise and glorify Him, in a word, can pray to Him. Well, if you are not pleased now while you are on Earth to be with God, to speak to Him, to pray to Him, then, you are not fit for Heaven, and will not enter there.

So then, we must pray if we wish to get to Heaven. However, we could not be always praying the whole day long, but only from time to time, now and again. When or how often must we pray then?

192. When must we pray?

We must pray very often, especially in the morning and at night, also before and after meals, at the sound of the Angelus-bell, and when we are in church.

We must, therefore, pray *in the morning and in the evening*, directly after we rise from bed (and are dressed), and in the evening before we (undress and) lie down to rest. We must also pray before we begin *our meals*, and when we have finished them.

Again, we must pray *at the sound of the Angelus-bell*, that is, when the bell gives the signal that it is the time

of prayer, when it rings in the morning, at noon, and in the evening. Why do we pray at those times? . . . What prayer do you say? What should you think of whilst you are saying that prayer? (Quest. 63.)

We must pray *when we are in the church*. Why should we pray especially there? Is not God everywhere? Could we not also pray to Him in our homes? Certainly, but God is present in the church in a very special manner, Jesus Christ is there with His holy Body and Blood, as He lay in the crib, as He hung on the cross (Quest. 177). In the church, Our dear Lord more especially helps us to pray, and prays to His Heavenly Father for us (Quest. 179). God wills particularly that we should pray in church, and He has also promised that He will grant our prayers more readily there. The church is, as it were, the house of God, where the good God dwells. You could, for instance, speak to the priest to ask him for anything, in the street, or in the school; but it would be better, if you have anything to ask, that you should go to him in his house. And you ought to love to go to God in his own house to speak to Him, to pray to Him there.

I have already told you how you should behave yourselves in the church, how you should pray there etc. (Quest. 179 and 180). Think, when you are in church, as if Jesus were visibly before you (just as He was in the crib, on Mount Thabor, with the apostles, on the cross). Would you have dared to talk and laugh etc. if you had been allowed to go with the shepherd's children to the crib? What would you have done?

Lastly, we are told we must *very often* pray, that is, many times. A child who loves God very much, will pray to Him many times a day even if it be only a few words. I have told you of a few special occasions when you should pray: When you pass by a church

and have a moment to spare (Quest. 180). When the bell rings at the elevation (Quest. 179), when you meet a priest carrying the Blessed Sacrament (Quest. 180 and 182), when you are tempted to commit a sin (Quest. 49. 148 etc.). Again, when you are about to begin anything, first pray to God to give you His grace, and when you have finished it, then, thank the good God; and thus you will lead a holy life, very pleasing to Him. We begin the day with our morning-prayers, and we end it with our evening-prayers (also meals, instruction etc.). Thus, dear children, you can begin every action with God; and then, everything will be sure to go on far better. For instance, when you have a task to do, you could say: 'Dear Lord, I will do this for the love of Thee; do Thou help me to do it well';—when you have finished: 'Dear Lord, I thank Thee that Thou hast helped me etc.' Many good children say such little prayers as these as often as the clock strikes.

Pray, then, dear children, often and gladly. A child who delights in prayer, is like the dear little angels in Heaven. God takes special pleasure in such a child, and gives him many graces. St. Aloysius, when he was only four years old (therefore *very young*), prayed several hours every day. When his mother wanted him, she knew well where to send for him, she knew he would be saying his prayers. He was very pleased to go to church, and, many times during the day, he thought of God and prayed to Him. Before he began his prayers, he thought: 'I will now speak with the good God, and cast out all other thoughts.' He never looked about him during the prayers, but was so quiet and well-behaved that everybody who saw him was pleased with him. That was how he obtained such great graces from God, and became such a very holy youth—pure and holy as an angel he lived, and pure and holy he died, and he

is now inexpressibly holy and glorious in Heaven. How he must now rejoice that he prayed so willingly and so devoutly! On the other hand, how many there are in hell who did not care to pray; how many in purgatory who were careless, idle and negligent in saying their prayers! Where would you like to go when you die? . . . What must you do then?

Up to the present I have explained to you what is meant by prayer; and how we must pray. I will now say something to you about the two most beautiful prayers which we have, and which we say the most frequently.

§ 1. On the Lord's Prayer.

193. Which is the most excellent of all prayers?

The most excellent of all prayers is the '*Our Father*' or the *Lord's Prayer*.

The most excellent, i. e. the best of all, the most beautiful, the most useful prayer is the '*Our Father*'. It is so called, because it begins with those words. It is also called the *Lord's Prayer*. Why? The following question and answer of the Catechism tell us why.

194. Why is the 'Our Father' called the 'Lord's Prayer'?

Because Christ, Our Lord, taught it to us, and commanded us to say it (Matt. 6, 9).

The '*Our Father*' is called the *Lord's Prayer*, because it comes to us from Our Lord Jesus Christ. One of His disciples one day said to Him: 'Lord, *teach* us to pray' (Luke 11, 1), that is, instruct us, tell us how we ought to pray. Then, Jesus said: "You must pray thus: '*Our Father*'" etc. So Jesus Himself *taught* this prayer to His disciples, and through them to all Christians, and at the

same time *commanded* them to pray in those words. Jesus knows best how we ought to pray, and we are sure our Heavenly Father is pleased, when we speak to Him in the words which His beloved Son Himself taught us. That is why the 'Our Father' is the holiest, the best, and the most useful prayer.

195. How do you say the 'Our Father'?

'Our Father, who art' etc.

196. What does the 'Our Father' contain?

The 'Our Father' contains One *Invocation* and Seven *Petitions*.

When you want to ask your father or mother for anything, for instance, bread, do you say briefly: 'Give me some bread?' No, you first *address* your father or your mother, you say: 'Father, mother (or, dear father etc.), please give me some bread.' So also we address or invoke God first, and then, we begin to ask. That is why the Catechism says: *The 'Our Father' contains one invocation and seven petitions*, that is, in the 'Our Father', we first invoke God, and then, we beg of Him seven things. How do we invoke God? Or, as the Catechism asks:

197. What is the Invocation?

The words: Our Father, who art in Heaven.

Why do we not rather say: Great God, who art above all? If you had to go to a very great and powerful lord to beg some favour from him, and he lived in a very grand house, and had a great many servants and people under his command, and you were obliged to go into this house, and into the presence of this great lord, you would feel very timid, you would scarcely dare to do it. Whereas you would easily venture to ask your

father for anything, because you know he loves you. So would it be with us if we rightly considered how great, how glorious God is, how even the holy angels adore Him with trembling awe (and how we have so often offended Him); we should never dare to speak to Him, to ask anything of Him; but if we remember that God is our Father and such a kind Father (Quest. 34), that He loves us so inexpressibly and is so willing to help us, then, we shall have courage and pray to Him with childlike confidence (Quest. 187. 189. 190). That is why we begin by saying: *Father!*

Why do we say '*Our* Father' and not '*My* Father'? We are to remember by that that God is the Father of all men, that all men are His children (Quest. 127). Well now, as brothers and sisters must love and pray for one another, so also we must not merely pray each one for himself, but also pray for all other men, for everybody. That is why you say also give *us* our (not, give me my) daily bread etc. For whom do you pray, then, when you say: Give us our daily bread? Only for yourself? Your parents? For whom then? Why? . . .

You go on to say: '*Who art in Heaven*'; is not God everywhere then? Certainly; but He is in Heaven in a more special way. He is now with us, but we cannot see Him, cannot see how infinitely beautiful He is. Whereas in Heaven the saints see Him, He shows them His indescribable glory. So then, when we say: '*Who art in Heaven*', we can think of two things: 1. '*Thou art in Heaven, dear Father, therefore, I will take off my thoughts from earthly things, and raise them up to Heaven*' (Quest. 185. 188). 2. '*In Heaven Thou rewardest all who pray rightly; I will, therefore, strive earnestly to pray well that I may one day go to Thee in Heaven.*' So then, when you say: '*Our Father, who art in Heaven*', it is the same as if you

said: 'Blessed God! Thou art my Father, and the Father of all men, and Thou lovest us all so dearly; therefore, I will pray to Thee with childlike confidence, and raise up all my thoughts to Thee so that I may one day be with Thee in Heaven.'

198. What do we ask for in the First Petition: "Hallowed be Thy Name"?

In the First Petition, we ask that the Name of God may never be profaned or blasphemed, but that God may be more and more known and honoured by men.

What must we ask for first, then? What ought we to wish for most, to have most at heart? A child loves his mother very much; he is ill and has to suffer a great deal of pain; but, at the same time, the mother also is ill, and the doctor thinks she will soon die. Now, for whom will the child pray the most? For his mother or for himself? He prays and says: 'Dearest Lord! only make my mother well again; I will gladly bear my pains if only my mother is cured.' The child, then, cares more for his mother than for himself, than for his own health. We are the children of God and ought to love God above all things (Quest. 123) more than ourselves; therefore, we must care more for God than for ourselves; it ought to grieve us more when God is offended, than when we are ill-used etc. So we pray first that *the Name of God may never be dishonoured, or blasphemed* (Quest. 142). We pray, therefore, and say: 'Dearest Lord! grant that I may never dishonour Thy holy Name, and also that others may never do so either.'

When we say: '*Hallowed be Thy Name*', we ask that *God may be ever more known and glorified*, that is, that I (and all men) may ever learn to know and to love God better and better, and ever honour Him more and

more (by loving Him with all our hearts, by taking pleasure in praying to Him, by obeying Him exactly). God is so great and so good to all men; and yet, there are so many thousands and millions of heathens who know nothing whatever of God, who do not love Him, and offend Him every day. And there are many millions of Christians who know about God, it is true, but, instead of honouring Him, they offend Him grievously, and we also, dear children, know and love God too little, and offend Him very often. Should we not grieve that the good and glorious God should be so little known and so little loved, that, in return for all His love, people only offend against Him? Say, then, with great fervour: *'Hallowed be Thy name'*, that is, 'Grant, O blessed God, that the heathens, and poor sinners, and all of us, may know and love Thee ever more and more, and try to do everything to please Thee!'

But I must now say a few words to you very earnestly. There are some even amongst you children who dishonour the holy Name of God. How can you who do this, dare to come before Almighty God and say: 'Hallowed be Thy Name!' whilst you yourselves dishonour it? If you do this unawares, if you are very sorry every time, and wish to correct yourselves, then, say fervently: 'Hallowed be Thy Name', and say at the same time: 'Dear Father, I will take great pains, not to dishonour Thy holy Name, help me, I beseech Thee to do this' (Quest. 143). But if you are not willing to correct yourselves, will not take any trouble, then, your 'Our Father' is certainly not in earnest, and cannot be pleasing to God.

199. What do we ask for in the Second Petition: "Thy kingdom come"?

In the Second Petition, we ask chiefly that we may all be admitted into the kingdom of Heaven.

In the first petition, we ask that *God* may be more known and loved. Well now, we pray *for ourselves*. But what is the first and most important thing that we ask for, for ourselves and for all men? The first and most necessary for us is that we should get to Heaven (or as we say, be admitted into the kingdom of Heaven). So we say 'Thy kingdom come'. In that we ask chiefly, i. e., above all (we ask other things besides this from God in this petition, but this is the most important), 'that we may all one day be united with God in Heaven'.

So if we wish to go to Heaven, what must we do? We must serve God (Quest. 1), keep His commandments (Quest. 119), do His Will.

200. What do we ask for in the Third Petition: "Thy Will be done, on Earth, as it is in Heaven"?

In the Third Petition, we ask that we and all men may do the Will of God on Earth, as the angels and saints do it in Heaven.

The third petition means: *May Thy Will* (O Father) *be done on Earth* (that is, may it be done by those who are on Earth, by us and by all others), *as it is in Heaven*, that is, as the angels and saints who are in Heaven do Thy Will. How do the angels and saints do the Will of God? They obey God 1. willingly and cheerfully, not fretfully and unwillingly, 2. punctually and exactly, not merely in great things, but even in the smallest thing, do what God commands them, 3. faithfully and constantly, that is, they obey always, not being obedient one day and disobedient the next; but they obey at all times, without ceasing. So also should we obey God. But we could not do that of our own strength (Quest. 169), God must help us to do that, must give us His grace. And we ask for this grace for ourselves and for all men when we say: 'Thy Will be done' etc.

But, children, when we pray thus, we must be in real earnest! Now, when are we in earnest? Little Charles thinks nothing of breaking the commandments of God. He pilfers, quarrels, fights etc. He knows very well that that is contrary to God's Will, but he does not trouble himself much about that. When God sends him any little suffering, when he is in pain, or when anything does not go on as he wishes, he is immediately impatient, he will not resign himself to the Will of God. And yet, he prays several times every day, saying: 'Thy Will be done' etc. Do you think Charles is in earnest in his prayer? I believe that he does not think at all of what he is saying. Is that right? Can this prayer be pleasing to God? Therefore, when you say: 'Thy Will be done' etc., then, say in your heart: 'Dear Father! help us, with Thy grace, that we and all men may obey Thee as perfectly and as constantly as the angels and saints do. I now firmly resolve to keep Thy commandments most faithfully, and to suffer patiently whatever crosses it may please Thee to send me.' And say this petition cheerfully when you feel tempted to be impatient under sufferings. (Examples.) Then, look up to Heaven, and think or say: 'Thy Will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven.'

You have heard that the first thing we ask for for ourselves is, that we may go to Heaven, and (in order that we may go there) that we may rightly obey God here on Earth. But, that we may be able to obey God faithfully on Earth, God must preserve our lives, and give us a very great many things which we need. And we ask for these things in the fourth petition.

201. What do we ask for in the Fourth Petition: "Give us this day our daily bread"?

In the Fourth Petition, we ask God to give us

every day all that we require both for body and soul.

We say: 'Dear Father! give us (give to me and to all men) this day the bread which we require this day and every day.' What is meant here by the word *bread*? Do we merely ask God to give us every day some bread to eat? No, we mean by that:

1. *Everything that we require every day for the body.* You may perhaps have heard people say: N. can earn his own bread. Does that only mean that he can earn as much every day as will buy him two penny-worth of bread? No; but it means, he can earn for himself all that he requires for his support: food, clothing, lodging etc. So we say here 'give us bread', that is, everything that we require for the body (food, clothing, health etc.) that we may be able to serve Thee well.

In order to be able to serve God, we require many things, not only for the body, but also for the soul. Therefore, we ask for:

2. *Everything that we require for the soul.* What do you require for your soul, N.? If you wish to serve God, to do His Will, you must, first, be able to learn to know God, to know His holy Will better and better through faith (Quest. 3). Well now, what is necessary in order that you may learn to know the faith better? What am I giving you now at the present time? An instruction, then, you need to be instructed in our holy religion. What do you further require if you wish to keep the commandments of God? You require the grace of God (Quest. 108. 169). And in order that you may obtain the grace of God, what do you need? The sacraments (Quest. 170). So then, when you say: Give us everything which we require daily for our soul, what do you mean? 'Dearest Lord, grant that we may obtain

instruction, grace, and the holy sacraments, and all else that we need for our souls, that we may know how to serve Thee well.' Now then, just tell me what you ask for when you say: Give us this day our daily bread¹.

202. What do we ask for in the Fifth Petition: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us"?

In the Fifth Petition, we ask that God may forgive us as we forgive them who have offended us.

We ask God, in the 'Our Father', above all that we may obtain Heaven, and that He may *give* us all that is necessary for that. Well now, we must also ask Him to *preserve* us from all that would prevent us from going to Heaven. Now, what would prevent us from going to Heaven? Sin. And first of all the sins which we have already committed; for so long as God does not loose us from them, we are unable to get to Heaven. Therefore, we ask in the fifth petition: '*Forgive us our trespasses*', that is, forgive us our sins which we have committed, by which we have offended Thee; do not punish us for them, take us into Thy favour again.

But we add: '*As we forgive them that trespass against us*'. Those who trespass against us are those who commit some sin against us, offend us. We say, therefore, to God: Forgive us our sins by which we have offended

¹ If the catechist thinks it well to do so, he might draw attention to two points in this petition. 1. It says: Give us *bread*, not meat, coffee etc., in order that we may learn to be contented with necessities, with what God sends us. 2. It says: Give *us* etc.; we, therefore, pray also that others, especially the poor, may have food etc. If we are in earnest in our prayer, we must also help in that as far as we can, therefore, give willingly to the poor; and we must never envy anybody anything.

Thee, and we will willingly forgive all those who have offended against us.

Why do we add that to it? Because Our dear Lord said: "For, if you will forgive men (those who have offended you) their offences, your Heavenly Father will forgive you also your offences; but, if you will not forgive men, neither will your (Heavenly) Father forgive you your offences." God will forgive us, then, only if we forgive them (do nothing to injure them, be kind to them, be friends with them again) who have offended, beaten, insulted, or grieved us. Therefore, we say to the good God that He may the more readily forgive us: 'Dear Father! we willingly forgive everybody as Thou hast commanded; forgive us, therefore, as Thou hast promised.'

Notice two things especially in this, dear children:

1. You know what a fearful evil sin is, and how severely it will be punished (Quest. 166—168). You have however committed many sins already, and perhaps commit fresh sins every day. How earnestly a person who is very ill, who is suffering great pain, desires and prays to be freed from his sickness! But the smallest sin is far worse than the most painful disease. Why? Say, then, very earnestly: 'Forgive us' etc., i. e., Forgive me (and all men) my sins, I will confess them with great sorrow, and, by the help of Thy grace, will never commit them again.

2. If anyone should vex, offend, insult or beat you, forgive him at once. Do not think: 'I wish something bad would happen to him', or 'I will pay him out for this some day', or 'I will never be friends with him any more' etc. For, if you think thus, and you say the 'Our Father', do you know what you would be asking of God? You would be saying: 'Forgive me exactly as I forgive this child who has offended me.' But you do

not forgive him; therefore, you would be saying: 'Dear Lord, do not forgive me, do some harm to me for it, never love me again' etc. Would it not be frightful to pray thus to the good God? Far rather say when you are offended, and you feel your temper rising: '*Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us*', that is, 'Dear Lord! I have often offended Thee, far more than this child has offended me, only forgive me, and I will gladly forgive him also from my heart.'¹

203. What do we ask for in the Sixth Petition: "Lead us not into temptation"?

In the Sixth Petition, we ask God to remove from us all temptations to evil, or to grant us His grace to overcome the same.

In the fifth petition, we ask God to forgive us the sins which we have already committed. But if God were to pardon us, and we were to commit fresh sins, we should again be unable to go to Heaven. Therefore, we pray to God to protect us from all that would lead us to commit fresh sins. What is it that makes us fall into sin? What was it that caused Eve to sin? The serpent *tempted* her to sin. What was it that led you, for example, to steal? You saw some beautiful apples, or something of the kind, and the desire to eat them *tempted* you etc. Thus we have many *temptations* (temptation means anything which leads us into sin, for instance, bad thoughts, or desires etc.), and these temptations very often cause us to fall into sin. So we pray to God thus: '*Lead us not into temptation*', that is, *drive* them *far from* us (that they may not come upon us), grant that no evil thoughts may come to us, that we

¹ The story of the servant who would not forgive the debt of his fellow-servant might also be related (Matt. 18, 23).

may not be obliged to hear bad words, that no bad companions may draw us into sin etc.

But it is not God's Will that we should be wholly without temptations. He even allowed Adam and Eve to be tempted in Paradise, and even Our Blessed Lord Himself was tempted. Why does God permit us to be frequently tempted? Think for a moment. Suppose you are very strongly tempted, to steal for instance; but you resist the temptation, you do not steal, although you could do so, and you have a great desire to do so; you show God thus that you love Him very much; and you will receive a rich reward for it in Heaven. Well now, has this temptation injured you, or helped you? Now, what are the only temptations that injure us? (Those we give way to.) Therefore, we pray to God: 'Dear Lord! grant either that we may never be tempted to evil, or, if it be Thy Will, that we should be tempted, then, *grant, give us strengthening grace* (the grace, that is, which gives, strength, which helps us so much) *that we may overcome the same*' (the temptations). Now, who resists temptations? When a companion wants to draw you away to play, and you do not go with him, do not allow yourself to be drawn away, saying: 'I will not', you stand fast etc., then, you resist him. So when temptation would draw you into sin, for example, to steal, to be in a passion, and so on, and you do not allow yourself to be drawn away, do not commit the sin, but say to yourself: 'I will not, I will not do that', then, you resist the temptation. Therefore, when we say: 'Give us Thy grace that we may resist temptation', we mean: 'Give us Thy grace that we may not be led into sin, may not commit sin.'

There are some children who lead themselves into temptation; those, for example, who go with bad companions where they will be obliged to hear bad conver-

sations, who are fond of going into the store-room where they have stolen fruit before etc. Can they sincerely and from their hearts pray to God not to 'lead them into temptation'? If a child is always running away from home and crying out: 'I want to go home, take me home, I don't want to go away!' is that child in earnest? So, dear children, if you wish to say the 'Our Father' well, shun, as much as you can, all temptations, and think when you say "Lead us not into temptation": 'I will be very careful to avoid everything which might lead me into sin' (companions, games etc.).

204. What do we ask for in the Seventh Petition: "But deliver us from evil"?

In the Seventh Petition, we ask God to preserve us from all evil of soul and body, especially, from sin and eternal damnation.

As we ask God in the fourth petition to give us every good thing which we require for body and soul (to serve Him well), so we ask God in the seventh petition to *preserve* us, i. e., to keep us, from all evil which would injure us in body and soul (which would cause us not to serve Him well). We say '*Deliver us from evil*', i. e., make us free from evil, grant that no evil may befall us; keep us from it. What evil could befall us then? Sickness, pain, poverty, hunger, death of parents etc.; although these things are not always evils; for they are very often for our salvation. For instance, many a one is brought through sickness to repent of his sins and to confess them, and is thus saved from hell; through suffering he can expiate the temporal punishment due to his sins, and so be freed from purgatory the sooner (Quest. 98. 99. 168) etc. But there is an evil which can never be for our salvation, and that is the worst of all evils. What is that evil? *Sin* (Quest. 167) and the

consequences of sin, *eternal damnation*, that is, if we were to commit a (mortal) sin and go to hell. Therefore, when you say 'Deliver us from evil', you say: 'Dear Father! keep me from, or free me from sickness, poverty, and so forth, unless Thou seeest that it is for my good (for then I will gladly accept it); but especially protect me that I may not commit (grievous) sin and may not go to hell. Deliver also all other men from their sufferings, sicknesses etc., and grant that they may not lose their souls through mortal sin.'

Lastly, when you say the 'Our Father', you add at the end the little word "Amen", that is, 'truly' (Quest. 118). It is as if you were to say: 'Yes, dear Father, I am in real earnest in what I have just said, and I have the sure hope that Thou wilt hear me.' I have already told you what children cannot be in real earnest. If you dishonour the Name of God every day, can you say "Hallowed be Thy Name", and then, say 'Amen', that is, 'Yes, I am in earnest'? (See, specially, the first, third, fifth, and sixth petitions.) Would it not be an offence against God, as if you wished to tell a lie to God, as if you were to say: Yes, dear Lord, I am in real earnest in saying "Hallowed be Thy Name", and yet, you would not be in earnest in that, for you would not hallow, honour it yourself?

I have told you, dear children (Quest. 194) that the 'Our Father' is the holiest and the most necessary prayer, and that God is most surely pleased when we pray to Him in these words which His dear Son Himself taught us. But it must also offend God when we say these holy words irreverently and without devotion, merely with our lips, and are voluntarily thinking of other things all the time. So, always say the 'Our Father' very devoutly. It is true you cannot always think of all that I have now been telling you about the 'Our

Father', but you can, at least, collect your thoughts a little before you begin the 'Our Father', and remember that you are now going to speak to your Heavenly Father (Quest. 188), and say to yourself: "I will say the 'Our Father' well, as Our dear Lord Himself wished it to be said." Then, you can repeat the holy words slowly and reverently, and think, at the same time, in your heart, of what you are saying with your lips, and perhaps recollect a little of what I have been telling you about it.

Now and then, when you have time, dear children, especially in the church, you could say the 'Our Father' *thus*: You say 'Our *Father!*' Then, you pause a little and say in your own words: 'Dearest Lord! Thou art my Father and the Father of all men, and Thou lovest us all so much; I will, therefore, pray to Thee now with child-like confidence.' Then, you go on further: '*Who art in Heaven*', and say in your own words: 'Yes, Thou art in the beautiful Heaven above where the holy angels are; therefore, I will now raise up all my thoughts to Heaven that I also may one day come to Thee in Heaven', and so you go on to the end. Try to do this, dear children, as well as you can; take great pains to always say the 'Our Father' with great devotion, and you will find an ever increasing pleasure in it, and God will certainly, through the greater graces that He will give you, show how agreeable your prayer is to Him.

§ 2. On the Angelical Salutation.

I told you, some time ago, that I would explain to you the two very beautiful prayers which we say the most frequently. Well, now we are come to the second which we generally say after the 'Our Father'.

205. What prayer do we usually say after the 'Our Father'?

The prayer which is said in honour of the Mother of God, and is called the Angelical Salutation, or the "Hail, Mary".

You all know what prayer is meant. It begins with the words 'Hail, Mary'. It is a prayer *in honour of the Mother of God*, that is, we say it, in order by it to praise and honour Mary, the Blessed Mother of God. We call it the *Angelical* Salutation, i. e., the salutation of the angel. Why so? Because it is composed of the words with which the *archangel Gabriel* (sent by God) *saluted* the holy Mother of God. We also call it the '*Ave, Maria*'. These words are Latin, and mean in English 'Hail, Mary'. We call it 'Ave, Maria' or 'Hail, Mary', because it begins with these words (just as we call the Lord's Prayer the 'Our Father'; Quest. 193).

206. How many parts does the Angelical Salutation contain?

Two parts: a salutation and a petition.

The 'Hail, Mary' is composed of two parts or points: The first part is a prayer of praise, that is, a prayer in which we praise the Blessed Virgin (and through her Our dear Saviour). (Quest. 186.) The second part is a prayer of petition, that is, a prayer in which we beg the Blessed Virgin (Quest. 186) to intercede for us, to pray to God for us.

207. Of what is the Salutation, or prayer of praise composed?

1. Of the words of the archangel Gabriel: "Hail (Mary), full of grace! The Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women";

2. of the words of St. Elizabeth: "And blessed is the fruit of thy womb", to which we add the name of '*Jesus*'.

Before I explain that to you, we must go through the following questions:

208. When did the archangel Gabriel speak those words?

When he announced to the Most Blessed Virgin Mary that she was to become the Mother of God.

209. When did St. Elizabeth say the words which follow?

When the Blessed Virgin Mary went up into the hill country to visit her cousin Elizabeth.

(Recapitulation from the Bible History.) When the archangel Gabriel appeared to Mary, he said 'Hail', that is, I greet or salute thee, and God Himself salutes thee through me. [If I salute anyone, I show him by that that I honour and love him; if I send my greeting, my respects to him, I intend to show him by that that I *think of* him with reverence and love. (Example.) When God caused Mary to be greeted or saluted, what did He wish to show by that? That He thought of Mary, that she was honoured by Him, that He loved her very much.] (Thou art) *full of grace*, that is, thou hast not merely, like other pious people, received from God this or that grace; but thou hast received more grace than all angels and all men, thou art *full of grace*. *The Lord is with thee*, that is, God takes a special pleasure in thee, loves thee more than all others. *Blessed art thou amongst women*; that is, among all maidens and wives who have ever lived or who ever will live, thou art the most blessed (the one whom God blessed the most, to whom He has given the most grace and happiness), the happiest (the one who will be esteemed and praised the most).

St. Elizabeth said to Mary as did the angel: *Blessed art thou amongst women*—and she added also: *and blessed is the fruit of thy womb* (she could not add *Jesus* to it, because she did not know then what Mary's Son, Our Blessed Saviour, would be called; but we know it, therefore, we *add* to it the name 'Jesus').

St. Elizabeth meant to say: Thou art the most blessed amongst all women, because God will send thee a child who is blessed, namely His own Son who will save us all from sin and from eternal damnation.

God Himself dictated the words which the archangel said to Mary, and the words of St. Elizabeth were inspired by the Holy Ghost. They are, therefore, very holy words, and on that account Mary must be pleased when we salute her with the words of the Angelical Salutation. For, think what joy Mary must have felt when the archangel Gabriel and St. Elizabeth addressed those words to her! If anyone were to tell you that the priest sent you word that you were the best of all the children, that he was very pleased with you, and that you would soon have a beautiful book given to you, you would be very delighted; but if an angel were to come to you, and to say: 'Our Heavenly Father greets you, He is very pleased with you, He loves you very dearly, and He will soon take you to Himself in Heaven', how much you would rejoice!

What joy Mary must have felt, then, when the angel announced to her that God loved her so much, and that she was to have the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, the dear Redeemer, to be her own Son!

Mary is reminded of these great joys as often as we repeat these holy words to her, and she is, therefore, very pleased when we salute her with the 'Hail, Mary'.

What should we think of, then, when we say the 'Hail, Mary?' We say: *Hail, Mary*, I salute thee with

the greatest respect, reverence and love, and heartily wish that my salutation could give thee as much joy as did that of the archangel Gabriel. (Thou art) *full of grace*. God gave thee the most wonderful graces and thou didst keep them faithfully all thy life long. O, obtain for me that I may ever faithfully keep God's precious gift of sanctifying grace. *The Lord is with thee*. God loves thee so dearly, O, pray that I may ever be a good and obedient child so that God may love me dearly also. *Blessed art thou amongst women*. All the angels and all good men praise thee; I too will praise and honour thee and give thee joy. *And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus*. Through thee I honour and praise thy Divine Son who made thee the Mother of God, who bestowed all graces upon thee, and raised thee to so high a dignity, and by whom we have all been redeemed. We now come to the second part of the 'Hail, Mary', the petition.

210. What words form the prayer of petition?

The words which were added by the Church: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death. Amen."

These words *the Church*, i. e. the pastors of the Catholic Church (Quest. 110. 111. 155), has *added*, that is, told Catholics that after repeating the words of the angel and of St. Elizabeth, they must go on to say: *Holy Mary, Mother of God!* Thou art indeed so holy (Quest. 47 and 108), God has such great pleasure in thee, and thou art the Mother of Our dear Saviour; therefore, He will surely listen to thee if thou wilt pray for us. *Pray for us poor sinners*. (A beggar, in order to move us to give him something, says how poor he is and how miserable. And we say the same so that Our dear Lady may have pity on us and pray for us.) We are so *poor* in our souls, we possess nothing that is good and beautiful

in the sight of God (have no virtues, no good works that can please God). And we are *sinner*s; we have done many wicked things, and if God were to punish us for them as we deserve, O, how would it fare with us! Therefore, (do thou) *pray for us now* that we may be very sorry for our sins, confess them, obtain forgiveness for them and serve God faithfully for the time to come. And pray for us more especially *at the hour of our death*, i. e. at the time when we shall die, that we may not die an unprepared death (Quest. 182), but receive the last sacraments, die in the grace of God, and go to Heaven. *Amen*. This we beg of thee with our whole hearts, dear Mother of God, and thou wilt surely obtain it for us of thy Divine Son.

With what reverence the holy archangel Gabriel must have addressed the Most Blessed Virgin Mary when he said the words which we repeat in the 'Hail, Mary!' Have you ever seen in pictures representing the Annunciation, how reverentially the angel bows his head and casts down his eyes? And yet he was a great and glorious angel. We who are only poor sinful creatures, can we come into the presence of the Mother of God, and salute her without reverence, without devotion? No, when you repeat the 'Hail, Mary', imagine yourself to be going into the presence of Mary with the archangel, and salute her with respectful and heartfelt devotion.

Why do we always say the 'Hail, Mary' immediately after the 'Our Father?' If you wish to ask your father for something, but you know that you have not been a very good child lately, you perhaps go to your mother and say: 'Mother, help me to ask father, persuade father to give me so and so', and you think your father will give it you the sooner, for your mother's sake. Now, that is how we ask Our Heavenly Father for important things in the "Our Father". But we also know that we

have not been good children of Our Heavenly Father; so we ask Our Heavenly Mother to help us to ask Him, and we hope God will grant our prayer the sooner, for Mary's sake.

Why does the Church wish us to invoke the Blessed Virgin more than all the other saints (for we do not pray to them after the Our Father) or, as the Catechism asks:

211. Why does the Church want us to honour and invoke the Blessed Virgin Mary more especially?

1. Because she is the Mother of God;
2. because she surpasses all the angels and saints in grace and holiness;
3. because, by her intercession, she is the most powerful advocate with God.

You know that we *honour* and *invoke* the saints (Quest. 138). We honour them, because they are the friends of God (whom God loves dearly), because they have lived such good and holy lives, and are so glorious in Heaven. And we invoke them that they may intercede for us, because God is certain to hear their prayers sooner than ours. But we honour and invoke Our Blessed Lady much more: 1. *because she is the Mother of God*. The saints are only the friends of God. Whom do you love and honour the most, your mother or your friends? Whom will God love and honour the most, Mary who is the Mother of God, or the other saints who are only His friends? Whom must we honour the most, then? 2. We honour the angels and saints, because they received so much grace from God, and kept it so faithfully, because they were so holy, so free from sin, their souls were so beautiful that God Himself took pleasure in them (and because they are now so glorious in Heaven).

*But Mary far surpasses all angels and saints in grace and holiness, i. e. she has far more grace and holiness, is far more adorned with the grace of God, is far holier than all the angels and saints. The Blessed Virgin never committed the smallest sin, she was even preserved from all taint of original sin, that sin which all other (mere) men have been stained with. As all the colours shine in the rainbow, so Mary had all the virtues together, far more beautiful and glorious than all the other saints. St. Aloysius was especially distinguished for great purity and innocence, St. Francis of Sales for great meekness, St. Francis of Assisi for great love of God etc. But Mary had all these virtues in a higher degree; in her they were still more beautiful; she was more pure than St. Aloysius etc. O, how beautiful the soul of the Blessed Virgin must have been! If even the soul of a poor little child who has sanctifying grace is so very lovely, how lovely must have been the soul of Mary! And how glorious she must now be in Heaven! So, how very dearly we ought to love her, and rejoice in her glory, and delight in praying to her! 3. We invoke the saints, because we believe that, by their intercession, they *have* great *power* with God, i. e. can do a great deal, can obtain very much from God. We believe that God will be sure to hear, for instance, St. Aloysius sooner than us poor sinners. But God listens more readily to Mary than to all the other saints, so she has *the most power with God*, she can do more, obtain more from God for us than all the other saints. Why? If your mother asks you for something, and a companion or friend whom you like also asks you for it, whom will you listen to the more readily, whose desire will you comply with first? Surely your mother's. Well now, the saints are merely the friends of God, friends whom He loves; but Mary is the Mother of God whom He loves many thousands*

of times more. Whom will God listen to, then? Whom must we, then, invoke more than all the other saints? Why? At the wedding-feast of Cana (if necessary relate the incident out of the Bible History) the wedding-guests had no more wine. Mary noticed it at once, and asked Jesus to help them. And Jesus helped them immediately, for His Mother's sake, and even worked a miracle, His first miracle, in thus complying with His Mother's wish. Do you think that Our dear Lady who is now in Heaven, will not take any notice, now, if we are in distress, if we call to her? Or do you think Jesus will no longer listen to a request from His most holy Mother? O no, Mary, Our dear Mother, will be sure to obtain help and grace from God for those who pray to her with confidence.

I will just tell you two stories of what happened only a short time ago, to some children, by which you will see how Our Blessed Lady helps and protects those who pray to her with confidence. A boy, about fourteen years of age, went too near the bank of a river and fell in. He got into a whirlpool (if necessary explain) where even those who could swim well must have been drowned. It was impossible for anyone to help him, and everyone thought he must be lost. However, the child did not go down, but swam on the water as if he had been sitting on a plank, until a boat was able to come and save him which was not till nearly an hour afterwards. Now, whom had the child to thank for this wonderful escape? He had a medal of the Blessed Virgin round his neck; and he kept kissing it, and praying to Mary for help; and Mary helped him miraculously.

In the large city of Paris, there was once a mother whose little child was very ill. The doctor came and said it could not recover, and would die in a few hours' time. The poor mother was very much grieved, and wept very bitterly. She had another child only seven

years of age who had already heard of the Blessed Virgin, how good and how powerful she was, and the child loved her very dearly. When this little child saw how unhappy her mother was, she knelt down before a picture of the Blessed Virgin, and prayed from the bottom of her heart, asking Mary to intercede for her poor little sick brother. Then, the good child got up and said: 'Dear mother! don't cry; little brother is sure to get well now; I told the Blessed Virgin about it, and she promised me she would cure him.' And from that hour the sick child got better and better and was very soon well again.

Therefore, dear children, if you are ill, if your parents or brothers or sisters are ill, if you are in any danger, then, pray to the Blessed Virgin with perfect confidence. She is your Heavenly Mother, and just as you run to your mother when there is anything the matter; so pray to your Heavenly Mother in all your troubles. And just as a good child loves his mother, so love her also with all your heart. Take pleasure in praying to her. Pray to her in your morning and night prayers. Say the 'Hail, Mary' and the 'Angelus' with great devotion, as if you saw Mary before you and wished to greet her in company with the angel Gabriel. St. Catherine of Siena, when she was only a little child, repeated the 'Hail, Mary' every hour of the day. You, also, can please Our Blessed Lady in many ways; Mary specially delights in purity and innocence, for she is the most pure Virgin. She dearly loves children who are pure and innocent; but children who delight in impure things she is not pleased with. Therefore, be good, pure and innocent children, and often pray to Mary thus: 'Dearest Mother! Virgin most pure! pray for me that I may be always pure and innocent.' And if evil thoughts come to your mind, or evil companions tempt you to sin, say:

‘O dearest Mother, pray for me that I may not fall into sin’, or: ‘Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us poor sinners, *now* and at the hour of our death. Amen.’¹

If you thus, like good children, honour Mary with all your heart, and invoke her often and very devoutly, she will be a good Mother to you, she will love you, she will protect you all your life long, and especially at the hour of your death; and then, you will thank her for ever in Heaven, and join with her in praising and loving her Divine Son Jesus for all eternity. Amen.

¹ If the children wear a medal of the Blessed Virgin, which it is very desirable they should do, let them be told that they should kiss it morning and night, and also in times of temptation, or at least, press it to their heart, commending themselves at the same time to the protection of Mary.



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FOR THE USE OF CATECHISTS AND TEACHERS.

BY FREDERICK JUSTUS KNECHT, D. D.

TRANSLATED FROM THE TENTH GERMAN EDITION.

PREFACED BY REV. MICHAEL F. GLANCEY,
INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS OF THE DIOCESE OF BIRMINGHAM.

The work, richly illustrated, will consist of 2 volumes (of about 500 pp. each).

"I have no hesitation in saying that Dr. Knecht's success is as great as his program is vast. The German work first saw the light in 1883, and since then twelve large editions have been exhausted.

This fact alone speaks volumes for his success. The work marks an immense advance on anything that has been published in this country. In fact *we have nothing in any way like it*; nothing that approaches it within a measurable distance. Our text-books, at their best, give but a good narrative; at their worst, I fear to say what they do. But best and worst alike have entered into an unholy covenant to give next to nothing beyond the narrative. Now, thanks to Dr. Knecht and his translator, we have a work, that in addition to a good narrative, supplies a good explanation, and an excellent commentary.

The very idea that Bible History needs an explanation and a commentary will, I suspect, come to many like a bolt from the blue. But I trust that after the appearance of Dr. Knecht's work we shall be ashamed to issue any more Bible Histories in the good old dry-as-dust style.

In particular I would call attention to the excellent 'Concordance of Bible History and Catechism', as it is called, given in the appendix. In it the teacher will find ready to hand an invaluable repertoire of Bible stories and explanations for illustrating his catechetical instructions."

(From the Preface.)

Schmitt, Jacob

Explanation of Deharbe's small catechism by James Schmitt. Transl. from
the 7th German ed. [Josef Deharbe S. J.]

Freiburg i. Br. [u.a.] 1894

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